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1996 MAGIC WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

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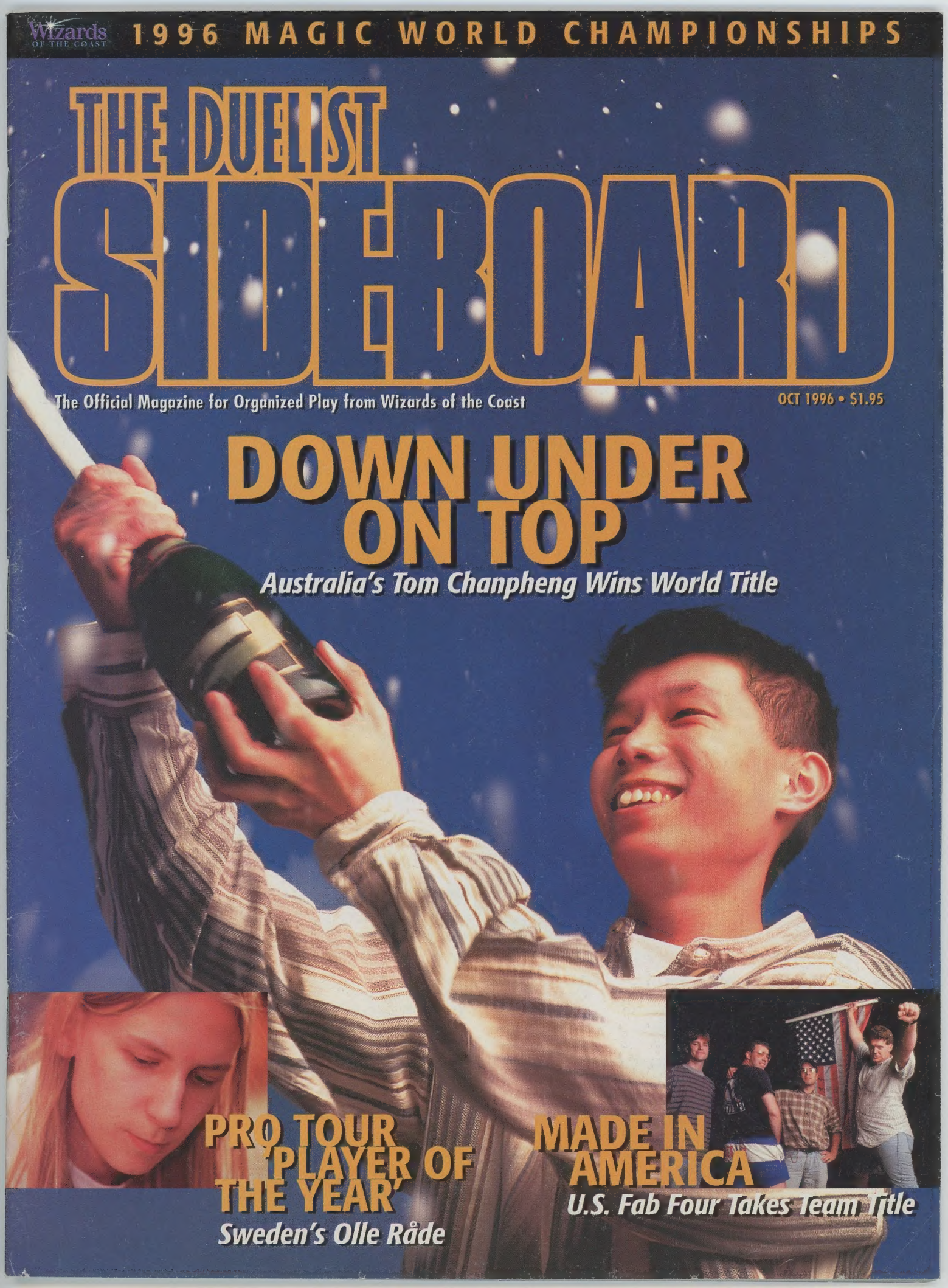
Australia's Tom Chanpheng Wins World Title



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Team Denmark ▼

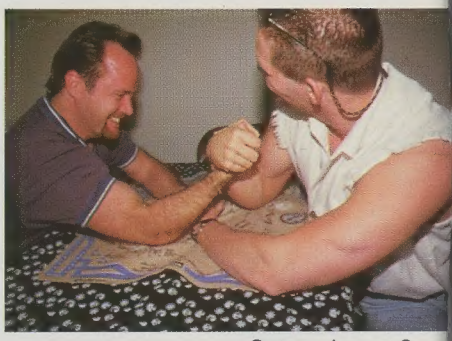
Team Finland ▼

The Duelist Sideboard
Volume 1, Issue 3 * October 1996

Cover Photos by Rex Rystedt

Mission Possible

Our mission: fill sixty-four pages in this new-and-improved version of *The Duelist Sideboard* with accurate, interesting and colorful information stemming from this year's **Magic** World Championships. Our goal: make every page—each player profile, deck analysis, and tournament recap—come to life.



Guess who won?

THE DUELIST SIDEBOARD
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Before we started, however, we needed to add some pivotal pieces to our puzzle. First, Shauna Wolf Narciso, art director for *The Duelist*, recruited the art design talents of Maria Cabardo. Cabardo, the former creative director at Wizards of the Coast (WotC), was just who we needed. She injected life and creative ingenuity into every page. Her splashy work speaks for itself; just thumb through the issue and you'll see what I mean.

Secondly, we needed a seasoned shutterbug who could pull some personality out of these intense, no-nonsense players. On another of Narciso's recommendations, we inked Rex Reystedt. Reystedt, who frequently photographs rock bands and rock concerts, performed the operation quite successfully. He coaxed emotion, striking poses, even grunts out of each of the twenty-eight participating national teams. Check out page 35 for the full effect.

As for "Worlds" coverage, we utilized the contributions of fourteen freelancers, which included four "Nationals" reports compiled at some of the earlier qualifying competitions. Two of our player-authors came with impressive credentials: U.S. Nationals Finalist George Baxter and defending World Champion Alexander Blumke of Switzerland. We also tapped several WotC staffers to provide information ranging from Arena League news (Andy Collins), to DCI rules changes (Jason Carl), to DCI rankings (Todd Bazakas and Toby Paul). Their efforts make quite a difference in our comprehensive approach.

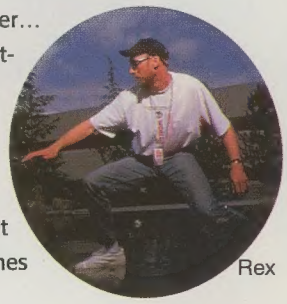
The actual event lasted five days, which included four days of grueling Swiss-style pairings (six rounds per day). The players were a bit fatigued, but the stories we gathered will surely spark interest in the **Magic** Pro Tour overall. Please read the issue and let us know what we did right and, more importantly, what we can do better. Your responses to our survey on page 59 will be an important tool for any future efforts.

Shauna

One player whose reputation seems to precede him at every Pro Tour event is Shawn "Hammer" Regnier of Manchester, NH, who qualified by virtue of his Booster-Draft victory at Pro Tour–Long Beach. A former professional arm wrestler, Regnier didn't do quite as well at Worlds (finishing a distant 75th), but still seemed to provide enthusiasm and energy for the players around him.

Maria

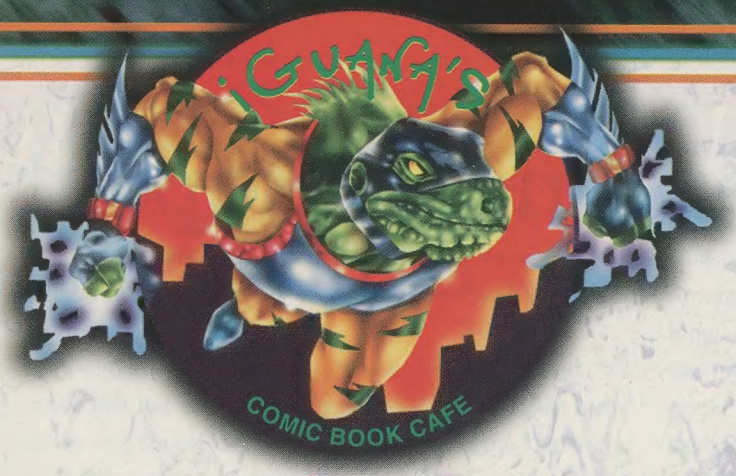
On a dare from Rystedt, I sat across the table from Shawn and challenged him to an arm wrestle. He looked surprised, but accommodated my request anyway. So what if I was giving away forty-five pounds, I had little to lose. And what I did have, I lost. I found out in a hurry why he's called "Hammer." Our tussle lasted about fifteen seconds long...thirteen seconds of which he just toyed with me.



Rex

In my opinion, the Pro Tour needs more players like Hammer... people who bring an interesting past to a sometimes predictable present. The Pro Tour boasts a variety of players and personalities for us still to discover; it's just that they are hard to find sometimes in a sea of black T-shirts.

Terry Melia



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FINAL STANDINGS 1st: Joseph Tan 2nd: Tom Champheng 3rd: Chris Hudson 4th: Craig Shepard

Australian Nationals Report

By Greg Cantori

A strange thing happened in Melbourne on July 6th: I ended up competing in the Australian **Magic** National Championships!

Each state of Australia (plus New Zealand) was allowed to send its Top 16 players to Melbourne to compete in the competition. Since my New South Wales state ranking was 36, I decided to load my backpack with camera, flash gun, microcassette recorder, and notebook to produce a quality tournament report. Just for the heck of it, I threw a couple of decks together, thinking that I'd have a few friendly games with some of the other spectators. Not wanting to share a ten-hour minibus ride with most of the top-ranked state players, most of whom were a little more than half my age, I decided to treat myself to a comfortable (and safe) return ticket with QANTAS airlines. This also provided an excuse for my wife and daughter to claim a 'compensatory' weekend away in the mountains.

I showed up at the venue, the Collingwood Secondary College, an inner-city suburb of Melbourne, at 8:30 A.M. Saturday. Wandering past a group of familiar faces, I heard one of them say, "Here's Greg. He'll play for us!"

Our state coordinator, Chris Zantides, who was also one of the four judges, was holding a clipboard showing our rankings from last month's state championships.

"Did you bring a deck?" Chris asked, putting a mark next to my name.

"Ummmm, yeahhhh?" I replied, vaguely.

"Hey, Greg can't play—he's here to do the tournament report," somebody exclaimed.

Reality set in. "To hell with the report," I replied, "is N.S.W. short of players?"

"Four players haven't shown up, and one canceled yesterday" said Chris. "Fill out a registration form, but don't join the queue until I say so."

Those four players never showed (could that ever happen in the U.S.?), so I got to play in the Nationals, hoping to be one of the Top 4 players who would win a trip to Seattle for the World Championships. Truth be told, I bombed out miserably.

My deck was mostly experimental: blue-white Millstone with Helms of Obedience and Arcane Denials. The idea was to entice my opponents to draw cards after every Denied spell. In principle, this would run them out of cards quickly with the help of Millstones, Recalls, Jester's Caps, and Feldon's Canes, but in reality it just gave them card advantage over me. The Helms worked nicely when my opponents had large creatures, but were wasted when weenies turned up. Of course, I had interesting matches with other creatureless decks, and it was a battle of the 'Canes' which decided the winner. In hindsight, after watching one of the quarterfinal matches, I should have used Howling Mines.

Out of the seven preliminary rounds, I finished 1–6, earning the inglorious rank of 93rd. My only victory was in the final round, and even then my opponent took a duel from me by decking me with his own Helm of Obedience. What irony! I declined to shred and burn my own three wretched Helms, only because they command such a high trade price. Later, I found out that they are definitely a good sideboard card.

Okay, but what about some of the good players? Who were they and what decks were they playing? Well, let's pick up the action after the conclusion of the preliminary rounds.

Chris Foggin, D.C.A. (Duelists' Convocation Australia) is speaking:

"And now the Top 8 will play off in the quarterfinals; half of them will go to America. In reverse order, they are: eighth place, Joseph Tan; seventh, Craig Shepard; sixth, Dane Coultman; fifth, Allan Grouby; fourth, Chris Hudson; third, Tom Champheng; second, Kevin Cheng; and first, Rod Ho.

The semifinals got underway after tables were set up and a barrier of chairs put in place. The first match to finish was the Champheng-Coultman pairing, with Champheng winning. Next to finish was the Ho-Tan match. Ho won the first duel in the best-of-three series, and put up a great defense against Tan's Necrodeck. Tan came back to win the

At this year's World Championships, the Australian/New Zealand squad included, from left: Chris Hudson, Craig Shepard, Joseph Tan, and Tom Chanpheng. Overall, they finished seventh among the 28 countries competing.

second game, after he took out his Necropotence altogether as Ho's red-green-white deck was dealing too much direct damage to Tan. The deciding duel went to Tan for the lack of a single mountain that Ho needed to draw to send him to Seattle. Afterwards, Ho was noticeably upset, and declined comment. Tan, on the other hand, was eager to chat.

"I've played Rod a couple of times before," he said. "It's ironic that I've actually lost to his deck before. It just came down to a couple of cards Rod needed to draw. I think the cards that won it for me were Dystopia and Lake of the Dead. But when all is said and done, it was the luck of the draw."

Did you have Sengir Vampires?

"No, I'm too scared of Control Magic. If a Sengir Vampire is used against me, I've lost the game."

The Hudson-Grooby match finished next. Hudson, one of 1995's four Australians to qualify for the Worlds, had just beaten Grooby's Pox Deck.

"It was a pretty fast deck," said Hudson, "I had to downspeed my deck just to cope, and take out some of my land destruction just to stay alive.

"I have a white-green deck. It looks a little like a traditional Ernham Djinn-Armageddon deck, but with a few changes. I think I adapted well to the *Alliances* cards, better than most of the other people here. I got the Thawing Glacier-Sylvan Library combination, which is great."

How do you think the Australians will do against the Americans?

"It's very hard to say. The Americans and French are very professional, and they handle the pressure of a big tournament well while competing for a valuable prize. But some people crack, and the Americans have done it before."

The really interesting match was still in progress. Kevin Cheng was playing a Stasis-Kismet–lock deck against Craig Shepard's red-green land destruction. Cheng's deck contained Despotic Scepters and Howling Mines. Its only damage card was Black Vise, and was designed to run his opponent out of cards. Earlier, I was told that it was the same deck as the Finnish National Champion. Shepard's main creature-damage cards were Ernham Djinns and Deadly Insects. Eventually, he beat Cheng 2–1 in a match that took almost ninety minutes.

So, after finishing first and second, respectively, following the preliminary rounds, Ho and Cheng were defeated and no player from the state of N.S.W. was destined to go to Seattle.

The semifinals followed. Champheng's Necrodeck defeated Shepard's land-destruction deck in a match that went very fast, even though they played three duels. The other semifinal saw Tan's Necrodeck beat Hudson's Ernham Djinn-Armageddon deck in a long, drawn-out battle. Even a player as experienced as Hudson wilted from the pressure.

So it was an all-Necro final! And then a little problem occurred. We had to vacate the Collingwood Secondary College gymnasium. It was 10:30 P.M. and as the final was scheduled to be best-of-five duels, we knew we were in for a late finish. Arrangements were made to reconvene at a nearby pancake parlor. I obtained directions to the parlor, which I was told was nearby. While everyone was making preparations to leave, I realized that I was quite hungry, so I set out on foot to find the pancake place and have a bite to eat before everyone else arrived. Big mistake!

Two hours later, after wandering the dark streets of Collingwood and Fitzroy, I gave up looking for the pancake parlor and flagged a taxi to take me back to my hotel. It wasn't until I returned to Sydney on Monday that I was able to find out what happened.

As far as excitement goes, in the finals, nothing could be as clinical and bland as two Necropotence decks battling it out. As many top players observed, it is usually the case of the person who plays the first Hymn to Tourach and/or gets an unopposing attack with a Hypnotic Specter who wins the duel. The final score was 3–1 in Tan's favor, and the duel details are as follows:

Game 1: Tan plays a first-turn Hypnotic Specter and a third-turn Necropotence to win. He then adds Cuombajj Witches and Serrated Arrows from his sideboard.

Game 2: Champheng plays a second-turn Hymn to Tourach and bags Tan's two Hymns! Champheng then plays a Sengir Vampire to win.

Game 3: Tan plays an early Hymn to Tourach. Both players put down a third-turn Necropotence, and play creatures and Drain Life until Tan breaks the stalemate with an Icy Manipulator and wins.

Game 4: Champheng suffers from a bad mana draw, with only one swamp and one Strip Mine for the first five turns. He is forced to discard for several turns. Tan summons and attacks with creatures on every opportunity to overwhelm Champheng and win the title.

◀ Team Canada, from left: Terry Lau, Eric Tam, Peter Radonjic, and Gary Krakower. The Canadians finished sixth overall at this year's **Magic** World Championships.

FINAL STANDINGS 1st: Gary Krakower 2nd: Terry Lau 3rd: Peter Radonjic 4th: Eric Tam

Canadian Nationals Report

by Jeff Franzmann

Very few surprises occurred at the second annual Canadian **Magic** National Championships, held in Winnipeg, Manitoba, over the weekend of July 27th. A total of 120 players from as far away as Whitehorse and Montreal came to compete for a spot on the four-member Canadian team. In the end, after a grueling endurance contest involving four rounds of Standard (Type II), four rounds of modified Booster Draft, and another four rounds of Standard (Type II), eight of Canada's best-known players found themselves facing off in the double-elimination finals.

Ontario was well represented in the Final 4, with defending Canadian champion Eric Tam and (soon-to-be-crowned champion) Gary Krakower, while players from British Columbia (Terry Lau and Pro Tour—Columbus semi-finalist Peter Radonjic) took the remaining two spots on the Canadian team. Manitoba, the host province, was represented by Ryan Rusau and Michael Gurney, who finished in the fifth and sixth spots, respectively.

If there were any surprises at all, it came in the unusual composition of some of the finalists' decks. While Necropotence was clearly a favorite (three of the final eight decks were sporting Necro), cards like Elkin Bottle and Storm Shaman brought Gary Krakower his victories. Several other players in the Final 8 utilized the tried, true, and arguably overpowered Necropotence design in their quest for the championship. The volume of Necropotence decks in the Final 8 prompted Tam to comment: "We should've played Necro," following a first-round sweep of the Ontario players.

Ontario fought back, though, and despite Necro's dominance, Tam mentioned that he's not going to learn from his mistakes, and will still refuse to play Necropotence. "I'd much rather play something which is interesting and fun," he said.

With all the talk about Necropotence, a lot of people were asked what they thought was the single deciding card in the majority of matches. While there were some scattered nods to Jester's Cap, and recognition that Winter Orb was seeing a lot of use, the majority of responses involved the words, "Hymn to Tourach," followed by lengthy condemnations of the card, its casting cost, and the luck factor it involves. Michael Gurney, the Manitoba/N. Ontario Regional Champion and two-time winner of the Campaign Outfitters Arena, was knocked out of the Final 4 after facing a Necropotence design. "He had the cards whenever he needed them, and he always used Hymn to Tourach on the right cards. What could I do?"

While the judging and tournament organization was, for the most part, problem-free, there were some widespread complaints about certain aspects of the tournament format. While the majority of players thought that the Swiss-style pairings system was the best way to go, there were many complaints about having only four rounds of Standard (Type II) play to determine the Top 32. The other major complaint centered around the fact that while a spectator fee was being charged, people were not actually allowed to watch any of the games during the first twelve rounds of the tournament. Hmmm...

Asked about the quality and composition of the Canadian team, the finalists were confident about how they would do at the Worlds. "We'll have to teach the U.S. team a lesson in humility," said Gary Krakower, who holds a dual citizenship with the U.S. "Half of me is insulted by that."

Eric Tam feels that the Canadian team is one of the strongest. His only comment: "Canada is going to rock."

Final standings 1st: Toshiki Tsukamoto 2nd: Satoshi Nakamura 3rd: Yoshiyuki Tsuruta 4th: Ryutaro Yamaguchi

Japanese Nationals Report

by David Low

The Japanese **Magic: The Gathering** National Championships were held June 13–16 at the Parco Department Store in Shibuya, Tokyo. The first three days were run as "Qualifiers" to prune the number of entrants for the final day; in fact, only two days of Qualifiers were originally scheduled, until demand forced the addition of one more day.

Qualifiers followed the Sealed-Deck format using two Japanese *Fourth Edition* starter decks. Players were divided each day into three groups, and the Top 6 from each group progressed to the finals on Sunday. This process produced fifty-four Qualifiers, plus a few invitational spots, to play in the final Standard (Type II) tournament.

Organization was magnificent: six rounds of Swiss-style play each day, each round consisting of one hour, with ten-minute breaks in-between. Pairing was accomplished with a minimum of fuss and refereeing was competent.

Between 150 and 200 people played on each of the first three days, meaning each of the three groups had about sixty people. Simple math tells you that players with 6–0 and 5–1 records moved on, while the top-ranked 4–2 players might have gotten lucky.

Personally, I made it to 4–1 and won the first game of the sixth match, then began experiencing complete mana shutdown, losing the next two games to Uchigasakai. That put Uchigasakai directly into the finals at 5–1, where he finished somewhere in the mid-40 range, playing a mono-green Millstone deck (mana critters, Ritual of Subdual, with Thelonite Druid as a surprise damage option).

By some miracle, I tied with Taira at 4–2, which called for a playoff! This was the only playoff of the entire event and drew quite a crowd. As much as I wanted to give them a show, Taira exploited my traditional weakness to great effect, and moved into the finals where he performed admirably, contending for the Top 4 right to the end.

The final match featured a mixture of decks, no doubt due to the mixture of people coming through from the Sealed-Deck Qualifiers. Spectators were not allowed to wander through the playing area, so I couldn't do the in-depth survey I wanted to. General impressions? Lots of white, with green-white somewhat more popular than blue-white. Erhnam Djinn-Armageddon decks were the popular choice. From what I could tell, many of the decent players decided to take the Necrodeck route, again spoiling the statistics. In the end, the Top 4 who qualified for the Worlds were (in order of rank): Tsukamoto, Nakamura, Tsuruta, and Yamaguchi.

Perhaps the funniest part of the whole finals occurred in the Tsukamoto vs. Nakamura matchup in the last round of the day. Tsukamoto had been pelting Nakamura's weenies throughout the match with Serrated Arrows. With games tied at 1–1 and time running out, Nakamura had drawn the one card which could save him—his own Serrated Arrows! He played it, and Tsukamoto said something naughty under his breath, looked at the clock, and politely asked if he could read the card to see what it does. The crowd loved it, and Tsukamoto went on to win fair and square.

CULTURAL FOOTNOTE

The Sealed-Deck tournament schedule went as follows: players built their decks, played the first round, then went to lunch. Everyone either left their cards on the tables, or took them with them. Identical Japanese *Fourth Edition* packs were on sale at the venue. Any worries? Not at all. The referee was puzzled when I asked him where I should deposit my Sealed-Deck cards. "Just leave them here, or take them with you," he said. The degree of trust in Japan is outstanding .

Team Japan finished tenth overall at this year's Worlds. Players included, from left, Satoshi Nakamura, Ryutaro Yamaguchi, Toshiki Tsukamoto, and Yoshiyuki Tsuruta. ▲

FINAL STANDINGS 1st: Amiel Feldman (also '95 Swiss National Champion) 2nd: Frédéric Lenoir 3rd: Alexander Blumke

Team Switzerland, which finished third overall at this year's Worlds, included Amiel Feldman and Frederic Lenoir.

Swiss Nationals Report

By Alexander Blumke

4th: Michael Suwald 5th: Andreas Weiss

Other Swiss players included Michael Suwald, '96 World Champion Alexander Blumke, and Andreas Weiss.

The Swiss National Championships took place June 15 and 16, and became the theater for quite an extraordinary feat. A total of seventy-six players who qualified for the competition struggled through four rounds of Sealed-Deck play, then five rounds of Standard (Type II) play, all following the Swiss-style format with no final direct-elimination rounds. For those interested, the Sealed-Deck competition consisted of one *Ice Age* starter, one *Fourth Edition* booster, one *Homelands* booster, and one *Renaissance* booster, plus five basic lands of one's choice.

My deck was okay. I had Lightning Bolt, Drain Life, and Soul Burn as my direct damage, plus some anti-weenie stuff like Immolation, Weakness, Spirit Shackle, and the ever-feared Blood Lust/Dry Spell combo. My larger creatures consisted of Shambling Strider, Folk of the Pines, Walking Wall, and Ebony Rhino. I had only one creature with flying, however: Junun Efreet, not very good with my Drain Life/Soul Burn combo. I played with almost no weenie, just Folk of An-Havva and Wall of Brambles to hold my opponents off. As "specials," I played with Orcish Lumberjack (could never use it to summon a creature, but worked well with Soul Burn), Krovikan Sorcerer (yes, I played *four* colors), Elemental Augury, Black Vise, Fear (in my sideboard), and Jade Monolith!

After the first day of Sealed-Deck duels, I was at 3–1. I lost against the old Lure/Thicket Basilisk combo while all my creatures untapped twice against the same opponent. Not even the Jade Monolith could help. Also at 3–1 were Amiel Feldman, the defending Swiss Champion, and Cyrille Martin de Foucaud, semifinalist at the 1994 Worlds. Five players—including the lucky one who found the best three *Ice Age* cards in his starter (Stormbind, Icy Manipulator, and Zuran Orb)—were at 4–0.

The following day was Standard (Type II) time. Our tests had proven that the Necrodeck, while dominating most decks, was consistently losing against a simple, red-green, land-destruction deck (four Stone Rains, four Thermokarsts, four Strip Mines, and four Icy Manipulators) with Erhnam Djinns, fast mana, and lots of direct damage (Stormbind), which we knew the northern Swiss players used. I almost played the white weenie/Winter Orb deck, which gave me Land Tax security and was quite good against Necro, but when I lost 2–0 on the morning of the tournament against a red-green-white, land-destruction deck with only Erhnam Djinns and Birds of Paradise as creatures, I decided to give my Necrodeck a little more land and mana destruction with four Icequakes, two Cuombajj Witches (also good against other Necrodecks), and two more Icy Manipulators in my sideboard.

It worked quite well; I reached a 4–0 record (7–1 total) before the final game. Unfortunately, I had to trample 3–0 over Cyrille's Armageddon deck in the second game of the day. With twenty-nine mana sources, he had the incredible bad luck of getting mana screwed without even my help.

Three players shared the lead at 7–1 before the ninth and final game, each using a Necrodeck. I played for the title against Amiel Feldman, the 1995 Swiss Champion.

I won the first game, drawing Necropotence when I had just summoned my last card (a Hypnotic Specter) the turn before. I got seven cards for 7 life, and, of course, won.

The second game seemed to be all Feldman's as he had consulted for a Dark Ritual in the first turn, but he made the mistake of letting himself get down to 7 life with his Necropotence while I had Hypnotic Specter, five swamps, and one card in hand (nothing else). The card in hand was, of course, Dark Ritual. He had no Zuran Orb in play to gain life. Had he drawn one card less, he would have killed me in two turns. But now, I could attack, put him down to 5 life, and kill him if the card I drew was a Drain Life!

No need to say I took time for my draw. And wouldn't you know, it was a swamp! Next turn, he attacked and drained me down to 2 life, and the game was over.

In the last game, Feldman had the Necropotence beginning again, and the game didn't last long.

So this was the extraordinary feat I referred to earlier: it was the first time I'd ever seen a player defend an important title (National Champion) in **Magic**. I congratulated Feldman and told him his victory raised my hopes for defending the World title.

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The 1996 U.S. National Finalist

Baxter's Road to the Worlds

By George N. Baxter

One great evil exists in the metagame today, a black sore that festers in the standard (Type II) environment. The name of the sickness is Necropotence: the black leprosy. This abomination of **Magic** repeatedly claims victory in tournament after tournament. Corrupted by the allure of the dark side, I traveled to Regionals with a Necrodeck, unaware of the truth that exists at the core of the deck. . . unaware until I faced Tim Danziger in the finals. He too had sold his soul, drifting into the darkness that is Necropotence. After a traumatizing beating, I recognized the horrible truth about Necropotence. The match between two Necrodecks is only a matter of which deck manages to [illegible] its victim first.

After returning home, I scoured the Net for results from other Regionals. The results from each competition echoed the same horrifying chorus: Necropotence, Necropotence, Necropotence. I felt sick. I knew that if I took a Necrodeck to Nationals, the end would be another skull-crushing defeat. I had only two options: I could play Necro or anti-Necro. If I played Necro I would have the same chance as about half the field. This was unacceptable. I had to find a deck that could beat Necro and [illegible] well against any other deck.

After repeated games playing Necro, testing matchups, and learning the enemy's deck, I discovered a few weaknesses. First, Necro is weak in the early game. Fast creatures combined with Lightning Bolts could cause considerable damage, while decks with a number of large creatures are unlikely to do well against Necro. Large-creature decks rely on removing Necro's threats and stealing playing land. When they attack you with a Hippo or 'Hymn' you lose those sources.

The Necro's second major deficiency is its mana dependence. It needs to use its mana each turn, causing its cards to pressure an opponent's resources. My first anti-Necrodeck attempt included Mana Barbs, Jokulhaups, fast creatures, and Serrated Arrows. Serrated Arrows is extremely useful against Necropotence. The average Necrodeck contains six "pump" Knights and four Hypnotic Specters—delicious targets for the Serrated Arrows. I think Robert Hann put it best when he called Serrated Arrows the Type II equivalent of Moat. The Arrows [illegible] anti-Necrodecks I constructed. The first of the two decks is listed below.

(60 CARDS)
4 Dwarven Ruins
4 [illegible]
4 Hurloon Minotaur
4 Icy Manipulator
4 Library of Leng
4 Mana Barbs
4 Mishra's Factory
4 Orcish Cannoneers
4 Serrated Arrows
3 Skyshroud Elf
4 Stone Rain
14 Mountain

This deck performed well against Necropotence, but poorly against most other anti-Necrodecks. Having 5 Mana Barbs against Necro frequently decided the game. Mana Barbs was most effective when followed by a Jokulhaups, which would clear the board and leave me back on the early game when the deck was strongest. But it had problems with Icy Manipulators and fast, large creatures.

The second deck that [illegible] was a green/white/blue Armageddon/Control Stasis deck. Here it is in early version:

(60 CARDS)
4 Adarkar Wastes
3 Armageddon
1 Balance
1 Black Vise
4 Disenchants
1 Gaea's Blessing
1 Hammerhead
1 Energy Flux
1 Forbidden Shrine
1 Icy Manipulator
1 Island
4 Mana Barbs
1 Savannah
4 Serrated Arrows
4 Stasis
4 Swords to Plowshares
1 Tetravus
1 Thawing Glacier
3 Wrath of God
1 Zuran Orb
11 Plains

This version was unbeatable against Necropotence because of its weakness to the early game. However, it struggled to match the explosive late game with some decks. Although it was actually my [illegible] against the Necro deck, most of Regionals I had a hundred hours to work on the deck, against each other solitaire-style, being careful to make the best plays based on knowledge of the opposite deck's hand. The cards with

st Explains His Route, Card by Card

far from encouraging: 61 to 39 in favor of Necro. Early Hymn to Tourachs and Knight of Stromgalds would crush me; I had to improve the deck in the early game.

First I added red for Lightning Bolts and Pyroclasm. This proved unsuccessful because of the damage I suffered from the City of Brasses I had to add, and the poor land draws due to the nonaligned colors. I then tried a different approach: I started working with Aeolipiles to eliminate early Knight of Stromgalds and Hypnotic Specters. I also added Winter Orbs, an excellent anti-Necro card, to slow the pace of the game. An early Winter Orb allowed the deck to move from the early game to the mid-game and reduced the effectiveness of the Hymns and Knights. The final prod-[illegible] ("Winter Orb Song") ded.

(61 CARDS)
3 Adarkar Wastes
3 Aeolipile
2 Armageddon
1 Balance
1 Black Vise
1 Deadly Insect
2 Disenchant
3 Divine Offering
4 Fellwar Stone
4 Icy Manipulator
1 Land Tax
3 Mishra's Factory
4 Serrated Arrows
4 Strip Mine
[illegible]
1 Sylvan Library
2 Titiana's [illegible]
3 Winter Orb
[illegible]
[illegible]
Swamp
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
1 Zuran Orb

[illegible] the early version of the B.O.S. and noticed that the Fairy Tower and Zuran Orb were very weak against Necro's [illegible] destruction. Without Fairy Tower's effect, and the Zuran Orb accomplished nothing against Necro's many onslaughts. I decided to experiment to make room for the [illegible]. The four Titania's Songs were excellent. I only wanted to play a Song after achieving a lock with Winter Orb and Icy Manipulators, and enough artifacts in play to kill my opponent. In most cases I needed to use the Icy Manipulators to lock down an opponent's land. When I play Titania's Song, the Icy Manipulators and Winter Orbs lose their abilities, allowing opponents to recover if they are not eliminated. I switched one Titania's Song for a Deadly Insect. The Insect allowed me to launch an assault without breaking the lock and turning my artifacts into creatures. Another revelation was that the deck required very little white mana to function. I cut two plains and added three Mishra's Factories, pushing the deck up to sixty-one cards.

I found that Winter Orbs and Armageddons worked very well together. With a Winter Orb out, my opponents need-[illegible] to continually play land. They could not hold back land and pose any considerable threat. After Armageddon was cast, my opponents had to draw land—and good luck to them. The deck now appeared ready.

So after many hours of gnashing my teeth and dreaming about cards, I arrived at Nationals with my anti-Necrodeck. The night before the melee, I sat down with Tim Danziger, the player who bested me at Regionals. He played my version of the Necro, while I played the B.O.S. After ten games the count was Necro 7, B.O.S., 3. My immediate move was to panic; my deck could not beat Necro. I began pulling my hair out and jabbering incoherently. Tim was frightened and edged carefully toward the door. Then the phone rang. It was Chris Pratt, a player from Abilene, Texas. I immediately began to complain about my decks terrifying failure, and Chris assured me that he and Lance Tokuda had a deck that crushed Necro. After fourteen games it had achieved fourteen wins. "I'm coming over," I said.

Lance, Chris, and I tested the deck repeatedly and it performed excellently against Necro. I began to consider [illegible]apping my B.O.S. deck and playing with Chris's. Lance and Chris both thought this was the best course to take. But I was torn. The deck's path to victory was via Howling Mines and deck exhaustion. That strategy not only violates every sacred principle I hold about **Magic**, but it cramps my style. I want to tear and burn and scar.

I woke the next morning bright-eyed and bushy-tailed after just two hours of sleep. Somewhere in those two hours I decided I would not play Chris's deck. I would instead play my own and live and die with the consequences. Hours later and several Stasis and Necrodecks [illegible] I was in the finals. I was ready for the unexpected [illegible] Stasis decks with the Serra Angels I had included in my sideboard as a surprise factor.

When I faced Dennis Bentley in the finals at Nationals, he deviated from the standard Necro that I had defeated all day. I was foolish and assumed Dennis was playing a variation of the standard. In Games 2 and 3 I failed to recognize that he played no Hermit's Disks. I left all five artifact-destruction cards in each game. His mixture of direct damage and land destruction overwhelmed the B.O.S. and he took down the standard Necro. I believe I would have [illegible] my earlier success. Bentley's ingenuity, however, [illegible]

If I learned anything from the U.S. Nationals, I learned to always stick to my guns. I nearly trashed a good deck that had already cost me considerable time and effort. I attribute my losses to Tim the night before, because of his excellent playing ability and familiarity with the deck. Well, that's the story. Guaca dude.

*George El Haber, who was also the 1996 South Central Regional Finalist, placed 56th overall at this year's **Magic** World Championships.*

A 1,001 Games: Preparing for the '96 Worlds

Over the course of 1995, Mark Justice of West Valley City, Utah, put together a string of high place-finishes that has yet to be equaled. He placed third or higher in more than 35 straight tournaments, including the '95 Southwest Regionals (second), '95 U.S. Nationals (first), and '95 World Championships (third). His play has been emulated, analyzed, criticized, and praised in various magazines and Internet forums, but rarely has his tournament preparation been the topic of discussion.

After winning the 1995 U.S. National Championships, Justice trained non-stop during the three-week period leading up to the 1995 Worlds. By his own estimates, he spent more than 100 hours honing various deck concepts in and around the Salt Lake City area. His third-place showing was a testament to all the hard work he logged during this time.

The last seven months of **Magic** playing haven't been as kind to Justice. His streak of placing in the Top 3 ended at the first **Magic** Pro Tour event in New York City last February; he lost his National title in July; and, most disappointing of all, he failed to place in the top half of all competitors at Pro Tour—Columbus. Justice admitted that his methods of training had grown slack. Preparing for tournaments the night before had taken its toll and the results were obvious. With the '96 World Championships approaching, Justice knew in order to have any chance at the title, he'd have to practice on a daily basis and absorb as much as he could on the latest deck designs and playing methods.

"I want to play a thousand games before Seattle," said Justice, a 26-year-old card shop owner. "Get me whoever you can. I just want to play."

New Philosophy

The first stop on his three-week training binge began with fielding a group of quality players willing to obtain information and play on a regular basis. The players he was able to convince to play him were Aaron Fitzgerald, Pro Tour—Columbus participant; Mike Callahan, Pro Tour—Columbus; Hayden Hedrick, '96 Regional Champion; Dr. Jose Burillo, of Spain; Sammy Batarseh, his heir apparent; and, of course, yours truly. We were all committed to helping Justice win the '96 World title because he's a good friend—and besides, he promised us all pizza if he won.

With the group assembled, our next goal was to obtain copies of the best decks possible in both Classic Restricted (Type 1.5) and Standard (Type II). So Callahan and I spent the first week scouring the Internet for quality test decks. These searches lasted as late as 5 A.M., but our efforts were rewarded with a plethora of information.

"Stasis and Necro," we told him. "If your deck can't beat them, you might as well play chess."

Insights

Testing for Standard (Type II) was simple, as we only had to prepare against the four main deck types: Necropotence, "Erhnamgeddon," "Turn on the Burn," and the increasingly popular "Turbo/Stasis." Classic Restricted (Type 1.5), however, was something new. But over the course of that first week, Callahan was able to compile a list of the twelve most popular deck types in this format. The decks we prepared off of this list included land destruction (both red-green and red-black varieties), control/Millstone, discard, the "Twelve Bolt Salute" (enough direct damage to choke a horse), and the "Storm-Drain" deck designed by Mario Robaina (Storm Cauldron, Lim-Dûl's Vault, Drain Lifes, and Fastbond). With test decks in hand, the parade of players began to pour in and Justice was able to practice against these decks as much as fourteen hours a day.

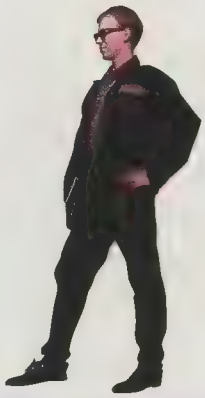
Booster Draft is the Key

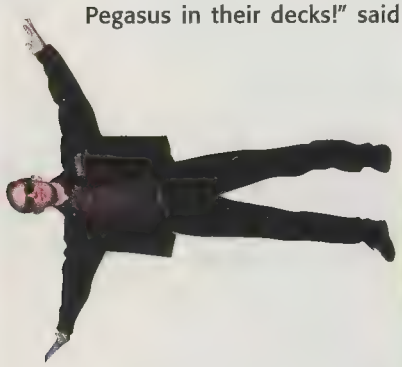
The other tournament type to be featured in the preliminaries was the ever-popular Booster Draft format. Justice

by Jack Stanton

keyed this as one of the events in which he'd have to go 5–1 during the course of the tournament in order to have a shot at the Top 8. Leading up to Pro Tour–Long Beach, he had compiled a listing of all the uncommon and common cards in *Fourth Edition* and *Homelands*, and the order in which they were arranged on the printing sheet. This information, when memorized, would allow him to know what the other players sitting at his table were selecting during the draft. Then he could concentrate on one or two colors that he knew were going to be passed his way. Unfortunately, Justice had misplaced the lists, so we had to rewrite the information, while playing Booster Drafts almost every night.

"Everyone's playing at a higher level now. Just look at what a year makes. I mean, at last year's Worlds, the Australians had Mesa Pegasus in their decks!" said Justice.





"During 1995, nobody could beat me. I wouldn't let it happen."
—Mark Justice

"You've got to stay one step ahead and play as perfect as possible if you want to win these days."

Justice's reputation is that of precise play and perfection. Making mistakes at the Worlds could have proved fatal. So we implemented the "no take-backs" rule during our play. We would chastise Justice for even the slightest of mistakes. Unfortunately for us, Justice was the one imposing this rule, while crushing us in the process.

Little lessons on obscure rules were common during our practice sessions. Armed with a copy of the General Rules Summary from Wizards of the Coast, we concentrated on discovering those rules most centered around the decks Justice might face. Players have won or lost tournaments based on such knowledge, and we weren't going to leave any stone unturned.

"I feel that a Top 8 finish is very likely," said Justice, the day before the Worlds started.

Mentally, a player must have a winning attitude. Without it, it is highly unlikely that he or she will take home a major prize. Since the advent of the **Magic** Pro Tour, I've seen top-level players fall into a melancholy state over the game. They start to believe that they can do well overall, but in order to place in the Top 4, they'll have to be extremely lucky. Players possessing this train of thought tend to practice less prior to large events, hoping that pure instinct will carry them to the top. With less practice, these players fared poorly.

These types of losses have been the downfall of many players' confidence. Justice himself expressed such thoughts over the last few months and his tournament showings suffered as a result. Rescuing Justice from this funk turned out to be easier than we expected. By overwhelming him with information on a daily basis, he had little time to brood. Instead, all of his spare time was spent debating the best possible ways to approach the Worlds, and which deck types could lead him to the Final 8.

"I accomplished what I set out to do, finish in the Final 4 for the second straight year," he said.

The day before Justice left for the Worlds, he expressed that he hadn't felt this good about a tournament since his National Championship victory last year. He predicted a Final 8 finish and he didn't disappoint anyone. Not winning the title for a second consecutive year was a disappointment for Justice, but his second-place finish this year was an improvement over last year's semifinal loss to eventual Champion Alexander Blumke of Switzerland. His showing at this year's Worlds just proved that he is still one of the most consistent, top-notch players in the game.

"And $16,000 is the best medicine for a second-place finish," added Justice.

DCI Player Rankings Report

TOP 200 (MINIMUM OF 10 MATCHES PLAYED)

CLASSIC (TYPE I) PLAY - RANKINGS AS OF AUGUST 8, 1996

rank*	player*	city,state*	rating*
1	Scott Schilz	Lakewood, CO	1855
2	Charlie Ramirez	Whittier, CA	1851
3	Bryce Currence	Palos Verdes Estates, CA	1806
4	Thomas Andersson	Täby, Sweden	1798
5	Matthew Place	Kansas City, MO	1792
6	Adam Hunt	North Benton, OH	1790
6	Greg Foley	Inglewood, CO	1790
8	Michael Katz	Rochester, NY	1785
9	Steven O'Mahoney-Schwartz	Brooklyn, NY	1779
10	Eddie Grubaugh	Orange, CA	1778
11	Keri Ann Mulinix	Irvine, CA	1777
12	Danny Broyles	Lubbock, TX	1776
13	Tomas Larsson	Spanga, Sweden	1775
14	David Bartholon	Ithaca, NY	1772
14	Charles Kornblith	Pasadena, CA	1772
16	Igor Frayman	Los Angeles, CA	1770
17	Chris Berryman	La Canada, CA	1769
18	Edwin Stahlnecker	Denver, CO	1765
18	Clint Couse	St. Louis, MO	1765
20	Chad Hastaba	Middle Village, NY	1762
21	Clint Whaley	Knoxville, TN	1759
22	Eric Kirkman	Denver, CO	1755
23	Stephen Hong	Hicksville, NY	1754
24	Doug Leonhardt	Atlanta, GA	1751
25	Wai Lau	Lake Forest, CA	1750
25	Jeffrey Kuta	Oakland, CA	1750
25	Gabe Higa	Lancaster, CA	1750
28	Scott Esstex	Fairfield, CA	1749
29	Darin Thomas	Thousand Oaks, CA	1746
30	Shawn Pinkston	Louisville, KY	1745
31	Russell Smith	Denver, CO	1743
31	Robert Kline	Kings Port, TN	1743
33	Jack Woosley	Henderson, NV	1742
33	Jason Zivelin	San Diego , CA	1742
33	Ryan Mahoney	Rolla, MO	1742
36	Morrie Mullins	Haslett, MI	1741
37	Shane Cargilo	Lake Forest, CA	1737
38	Eric Taylor	Freeport, IL	1736
39	James Paul Wisniewiski	Buffalo, NY	1735
39	Paul Beemer	Downey, CA	1735
39	David Strunk Jr.	Anaheim, CA	1735
42	Kent Bridge	Norman, OK	1733
43	George Ngo	Los Angeles, CA	1732
44	Ashleigh Heiser	Boulder, CO	1730
44	Jeff Broido	San Diego, CA	1730
44	Sam Hau	Los Angeles, CA	1730
47	Don Mayhew	Lincoln, NE	1729
47	Gary Glass	Thousand Oaks, CA	1729
49	Steve Hatten	Rock Falls, IL	1727
50	Nathan Jones	Centralia, IL	1726
50	Adrian Dandrea	Elmira, NY	1726
52	Adam Green	Nashua, NH	1725
53	Leon Lindbäck	Stockholm, Sweden	1724
53	Patrick Albro	Rochester, NY	1724
55	Michael Pustilnik	Silver Spring , MD	1723
56	Paul Paella	Tonawanda, NY	1722
57	Michael Loconto	Grafton, MA	1721
58	Johan Disenborg	Tyresö, Sweden	1720
58	Richard Dixon	Lawrenceburg, VA	1720
60	Jason Keller	Arlington, TX	1718
61	Biren Amin	Laurel, MD	1717
62	Henry Johnson	San Luis Obispo, CA	1716
62	Mark Chalice	Claremont, CA	1716
64	Tony Tsai	Ithaca, NY	1715
64	Michael Nickoloff	La Canada, CA	1715
66	Benjamin Rush	–	1714
66	Louis Parrington	–	1714
66	Jason Pass	Regina, Canada	1714
66	Harris Kupperman	Brookville, NY	1714
66	Michael Naverre	Balboa Island, CA	1714
66	James Zazula	Thunder Bay, Canada	1714
72	Scott Holman	–	1713
72	Alex Hidalgo	Miami, FL	1713
72	Joe Oxford	Oklahoma City, OK	1713
75	Chris Baker	Hermitage, TN	1712
76	Michael Sparks	Glen Cove, NY	1711
76	Bob Dove	Bridgeton, MO	1711
76	Heath Jennings	Thousand Oaks, CA	1711
79	Damon Dubois	Moorpark, CA	1709
80	Darwin Kastle	Boston, MA	1708
81	Dustin Nordike	Carlyle, IL	1707
82	Joe Smith	Dixon, MO	1704
82	Jay Austin	Escondido, CA	1704
84	Charles Estes	–	1703
84	Ted Stanulis	Ann Arbor, MI	1703
84	Brandon Chapman	Rolla, MO	1703
84	John Grieggs	Pasadena, CA	1703
84	Jim Lemire	Southboro, MA	1703
89	Chris Cojar	Saskatoon, Canada	1701
89	Brian Weissman	Campbell, CA	1701
91	Tim Keefer	Canton, OH	1700
91	Ray Placious	Macedon, NY	1700
91	Dale Baginski	E. Lansing, MI	1700
91	Justin Schroeder	Ft. Collins , CO	1700
91	Bernard Chang	Irvine, CA	1700
96	Derek Corsaro	Las Vegas, NV	1699
97	Neil Guthrie	Stockholm, Sweden	1698
98	Daniel O'Mahoney-Schwartz	Brooklyn, NY	1697
98	Michael Dove	Rolla, MO	1697
98	Rex Nguyen	Cupertino, CA	1697
101	Andrew Corley	Hicksville, NY	1696
101	Steven Loube	Duluth, GA	1696
101	Jason Gordon	Fairfield , CT	1696
101	Corey Hill	Miami, FL	1696
105	Zvi Mowshowitz	New York, NY	1693
106	Phong Huynh	Grand Prairie, TX	1692
106	Aaron Terry	Plantation , FL	1692
108	John Spencer	Asheboro, NC	1691
108	Tim Wiinikainen	Davie, FL	1691
110	Kenny Barefoot	High Point, NC	1690
110	Rob Raven	Arvada, CO	1690
112	Cyrus Alimadadian	Anaheim, CA	1689
113	Jeremy Rathert	Newburg, MO	1687
113	Ben Lee	Shrewsbury, MA	1687
115	Joseph Beck	Ithaca, NY	1684
116	Mike Jackey	Louisville, KY	1683
116	Jay Luo	Dunwoody, GA	1683
116	Michael Patterson	Colorado Springs, CO	1683
119	Lennart Borg	Taby, Sweden	1682
120	John Elder	Lansing, MI	1681
121	Mark Cheshire	Kinston, NC	1680
121	Kurtis Hinderliter	Wichita, KS	1680
121	Jesse Chounard	Newburg, MO	1680
121	Alexander Zane	Tujunga, CA	1680
121	Brad Biddle	Huntington Beach, CA	1680
121	Evan Gridley	Reston, VA	1680
127	Richard Podolsky	Philadelphia, PA	1679
128	Michael Schulte	Simi Valley, CA	1678
128	Mark Venhaus	Hawthorne, CA	1678
128	Thierry Dallacroce	Calabassas, CA	1678
131	Robin Norris	Aliso Viejo, CA	1677
131	Chris Cade	San Jose, CA	1677
133	Bryan White	Glen Cove, NY	1676
133	Terry Don	San Lorenzo, CA	1676
133	David Berg	Rolla, MO	1676
133	Joel Unger	Santa Barbara, CA	1676
137	Jonathan Jarembek	Williamsville, NY	1675
138	Tom Tingstadius	Spanga, Sweden	1674
139	Robert Abel	Davie, FL	1673
140	William Summers Ii	Manna, CA	1671
141	Jonathan Derbowka	Regina, Canada	1670
141	Drew Sanders	Arleta, CA	1670
143	Robert Crosby	Northridge, CA	1669
143	Christopher Otwell	Colorado Springs, CO	1669
143	Ryan Simpkins	Newport Beach, CA	1669
146	James McGovern	Middle Village, NY	1668
147	David Everch	–	1664
147	Afshin Coleman	San Francisco, CA	1664
149	Jeff Reed	–	1663
150	Mikael Magnusson	Tyreso, Sweden	1662
151	Kevin Cain	Levittown, NY	1661
152	Chris Devine	–	1660
152	Pat Langworthy	Rochester, NY	1660
152	Harry Dinch	Fayetteville, GA	1660
152	Gabriel Aid	Sherman Oaks, CA	1660
156	Adam Heis	–	1659
156	Joseph Phelps	Mt. Washington, KY	1659
156	Brian Fenwick	Ft. Collins, CO	1659
159	Brad Leighton	Regina, Canada	1658
159	Matt Kimbril	Wichita, KS	1658
159	Joey Weisman	Highland Park, IL	1658
162	Robert Campbell	Alameda, CA	1657
162	Larry Harrison	Pleasanton , CA	1657
164	Mike Mertens	New York, NY	1655
164	Brian Chives	Wyoming, MI	1655
166	Gere Camper	Wichita, KS	1654
167	Stephen Barnes	Fairdale, KY	1653
167	Nic Grammatico	Rochester, NY	1653
167	Dan Hörning	Stockholm, Sweden	1653
167	Dennis Bentley	Churchville, NY	1653
167	Mike Donovan	Robertsville, MO	1653
172	Jerry Ross	Lansing, MI	1652
172	Shannon Hill	Lubbock, TX	1652
172	Adam Maysonet	Sunrise, FL	1652
175	Mike Platte	Ada, MI	1651
175	Matt Crook	Rolla, MO	1651
175	Corey Lay	Downey, CA	1651
175	Ian Rohdi	Huntington Beach, CA	1651
175	Scott Johns	Northridge, CA	1651
180	Jonathan Kessler	Bethpage, NY	1650
180	Graham Free	Ithaca, NY	1650
180	Jim Allen	Andover, MA	1650
180	Sean Klem	Oakland, CA	1650
184	Oliver Rothschild	New York, NY	1649
185	James Fendelander	Los Angeles, CA	1647
185	Jeneice Aid	Tarzana, CA	1647
185	Billy Gilmore	Cabool, MO	1647
188	Tyler Gurciullo	Los Angeles, CA	1646
189	Julia Berggren	San Diego, CA	1645
190	Britton O'Toole	Villa Park, CA	1644
191	Miguel Villavicencio	South Pasadena, CA	1643
192	Brandon Goldstein	New York, NY	1641
193	Les Douglas	Lakewood, CA	1640
194	Trevor Boliantz	Regina, Canada	1639
194	Scott Johnson	Centralia, IL	1639
194	Andy Baquero	Woodside, NY	1639
197	Jon-Paul Barbier	Monterey, CA	1638
198	Kelsey Muma	Weyburn, Canada	1637
198	Tim McCarthy	Whittier, CA	1637
200	Steven Shears	Whittier, CA	1636
200	Eric C. Strome	Simi Valley, CA	1636

DCI Player Rankings Report

TOP 200 (MINIMUM OF 10 MATCHES PLAYED)

STANDARD (TYPE II) PLAY • RANKINGS AS OF AUGUST 8, 1996

rank*	player*	city,state*	rating*
1	Thomas Andersson	Täby, Sweden	1929
2	Dennis Bentley	Churchville, NY	1887
3	Matt Place	Kansas City, MO	1876
4	Scott Johns	Northridge, CA	1874
5	Neil Guthrie	Stockholm, Sweden	1872
6	David Dittmer	Acton, MA	1871
7	Adam Green	Nashua, NH	1870
8	John Immordino	Carmichael, CA	1854
9	Mike Dove	Rolla, MO	1849
10	Nathan Allen	Santa Barbara, CA	1848
11	Jason Zila	Huntington Beach, CA	1844
12	David Bachmann	Linden, NJ	1843
13	George H. Baxter	Dallas, TX	1836
14	Justin Schneider	Lutherville, MD	1835
15	Eric Tam	Toronto, Canada	1833
16	Javier Garavito	Kent, WA	1829
17	Tim Danzinger	Bartlesville, OK	1827
18	Alvaro Marques	London, Canada	1820
19	Alan Comer	San Marcos, CA	1819
19	Peter Leihler	Largo, FL	1819
21	Aaron Terry	Plantation, FL	1818
22	Aaron Kline	East Windsor, NJ	1814
23	Jon Press	Wichita, KS	1809
24	James Murphy	Arlington, TX	1808
25	Bruce Swiney	Tacoma, WA	1805
26	Paul McCabe	Toronto, Canada	1803
27	Frank T. Gilson	Anaheim, CA	1801
27	Greg Waldeck	Wichita, KS	1801
29	David Press	Wichita, KS	1799
30	Joe Steen	Miami, FL	1796
31	James Robinson	Walnut, CA	1795
31	Kyle Bigos	Tallahassee, FL	1795
33	Darwin Mess (Kastle)	Boston, MA	1794
34	Alex Mcconnell	Tallahassee, FL	1793
34	Jon Finkel	Fanwood, NJ	1793
34	Mike Guptil	Clinton Township, MI	1793
37	Chris Cade	San Jose, CA	1792
37	Robert Gray	Largo, FL	1792
39	Chris Pikula	Chester, IN	1790
39	David Collins	Brooklyn, NY	1790
39	Kurt Burgner	Torrance, CA	1790
42	Lucas Gonzalez	Miami, FL	1789
43	Gabe Higa	Lancaster, CA	1788
44	Andrew Morby	Olympia, WA	1786
44	Solomon Malka	Atlanta, GA	1786
46	Terry Borer	North York, Canada	1785
47	Paul Ferker	Philadelphia, PA	1783
47	Thierry Dallacroce	Calabassas, CA	1783
49	Kirk Simmons	Wayzata, MN	1782
49	Rick Latham	Springfield, MO	1782
51	Brian Weissman	Campbell, CA	1781
52	Jesse Powell	Stockton, CA	1780
53	Collin Hayes	Plantation, FL	1777
53	Ryan Stubblefield	Irvine, CA	1777
53	Tom Guevin	Nashua, NH	1777
56	James Takenaga	Riverside, CA	1776
56	MacKenzie Patterson	Carmel, CA	1776
56	Ron Fraigun	Tujunga, CA	1776
59	Michael Bregoli	Southwick, MA	1775
60	Harold Rex	Burton, MI	1773
61	Scott Becker	San Luis Obispo, CA	1772
62	Steven O'Mahoney-Schwartz	Brooklyn, NY	1771
63	Cory Hudson-Jones	Capo Beach, CA	1770
63	Tomas Larsson	Spanga, Sweden	1770
65	Jeff Zandi	Coppell, TX	1769
65	Josh Bradford	Tallahassee, FL	1769
67	Adam Maysonet	Sunrise, FL	1768
67	Brad Mennell	Newton, MA	1768
67	Brendon Herzog	Portland, OR	1768
67	Greg Hunt	Ithaca, NY	1768
67	Lonnie Meador	Abilene , TX	1768
72	Biren Amin	Laurel, MD	1767
72	Dan Hörning	Stockholm, Sweden	1767
72	Jack Xiong	Houston, TX	1767
75	Daniel O'Mahoney-Schwartz	Brooklyn, NY	1766
75	Scott Reinfield	Boynton Beach, FL	1766
75	Travis Thomas	Loral Springs, FL	1766
78	Eric Nakayama	San Diego, CA	1765
79	Allan Shuldiner	Torrance, CA	1763
79	Brett Quorn	Woodland, WA	1763
79	Worth Wollpert	Chardon, OH	1763
82	Chris Berryman	La Canada, CA	1761
82	Mario Robaina	Manhattan Beach, CA	1761
84	Chad Hastaba	Middle Village, NY	1760
84	Mark Hendrickson	Covina, CA	1760
86	Truc Bui	Los Angeles, CA	1759
87	Mark Justice	West Valley City, UT	1758
87	Peter Radonjic	New Westminster, Canada	1758
89	Kai Martin	Winfield , IL	1757
89	Scott Hustad	Aberdeen, SD	1757
91	Eric Albertson	Portland, OR	1756
91	Heath Jennings	Thousand Oaks, CA	1756
91	Jason Rodriguez	Arlington, TX	1756
91	MacKenzie Patterson Jr.	Carmel, CA	1756
95	David Mould	Saskatoon, Canada	1755
95	Kent McClard	Goleta, CA	1755
97	Paul Scott	Hoboken, NJ	1754
98	Bob Wagner	Chicago, IL	1753
98	Tom Pettigrew	Anchorage, AK	1753
100	Brady Jess Feliz	Los Angeles, CA	1751
101	David Bartholon	Ithaca, NY	1750
101	Mike Bartholomew	Healdsburg, CA	1750
101	Pedram Saif	Lake Forest, CA	1750
101	Thomas Griffith	Los Angeles, CA	1750
105	Cary Darwin	Rowlett, TX	1749
105	Derek Rank	Centerville, VA	1749
105	Travis White	Rohnert Park, CA	1749
108	Billy Todd	Easley, SC	1748
108	Maxwell Suver	Seattle, WA	1748
110	Ben Bleiweiss	New Orleans, LA	1747
111	Henry Johnson	San Luis Obispo, CA	1746
112	Aziz Al-Doory	Tallahassee, FL	1745
113	Huei-Saint Shwe	Sunnyvale, CA	1744
113	Sean Fleischman	Bronx, NY	1744
115	Jason Hee	–	1743
115	Joseph Phelps	Mt. Washington, KY	1743
115	Tapani Utriainen	Göteborg, Sweden	1743
118	Joel Unger	Santa Barbara, CA	1742
119	Marcus Lagerstrom-Holm	Sundbyberg, Sweden	1741
119	Matthew Kursar	Rancho Palos Verdes, CA	1741
121	Brian Smith	Sunnyvale, CA	1740
121	Cary Newburger	New York, NY	1740
121	Mathew Thornton	Chicago, IL	1740
121	Matt Simmons	Cerritos, CA	1740
125	David Berg	Rolla, MO	1739
125	Marcus Angelin	Stockholm, Sweden	1739
125	Mike May	New York, NY	1739
125	Robert Koschak	Minneapolis, MN	1739
129	Bob Maher Jr.	Freeport, IL	1738
129	Christopher Esko	Pittsburgh, PA	1738
129	Jeremy Genrich	Omaha, NE	1738
129	Robert Hahn	New York, NY	1738
129	Stephen Hong	Hicksville, NY	1738
134	Dennis Lee Nichols	Omaha, NE	1737
134	Larry McBride	Temecula, CA	1737
134	Mark Chalice	Claremont , CA	1737
134	Rex Nguyen	Cupertino, CA	1737
138	Jason Smith	Provo, UT	1735
139	Matthew Wang	New York, NY	1734
139	Preston Poulter	Irvine, CA	1734
139	Tom Page	Los Angeles, CA	1734
142	Jan Ramsöy	Göteborg, Sweden	1733
142	Justin Stiles	Springfield, MO	1733
144	Bryce Currence	Palosperdes Estates, CA	1731
144	Chris Pratt	Abilene, TX	1731
144	David Parker	Rochester, NY	1731
144	James Hillis	Langley, Canada	1731
144	Jeff Kostick	Gainesville, FL	1731
149	Andrew Sutherland	Concord, MA	1730
149	Kyle Rose	Chester, VA	1730
149	Matthew Vienneau	Toronto, Canada	1730
152	Aung Thaung	Pompano Beach, FL	1729
152	Brett Shears	Whittier, CA	1729
152	David Adams	Chesterfield, VA	1729
152	Matt Taranto	Norwich , NY	1729
152	Rupert Hildago	Miami, FL	1729
152	Sam Heckman	Elgin, IL	1729
158	Scott Martin	Arlington, TX	1728
159	Bo Bell	San Dimas, CA	1727
159	Zig Laing	Washington, UTA	1727
161	Ben Murray	Oberlin, OH	1726
161	Christopher Gross	Crofton, MD	1726
161	Dawn Fontaine	Irving, TX	1726
161	James Wilson	–	1726
161	Matt Perez	Redmond, WA	1726
166	Dorian Hart	Somerville, MA	1725
167	Alex Garamvolgyi	Brooklyn, NY	1724
167	Jason Murray	Yuba City, CA	1724
167	Joseph Vasiladiotis	Douglastown, NY	1724
167	Olle Råde	Göteborg, Sweden	1724
171	Arthur Kimes	Los Angeles, CA	1723
171	Scott Prince	Burton, MI	1723
173	Daniel Barry Jr.	Stockton, CA	1722
173	David Carrin Jr	Jacksonville, FL	1722
173	Matt Hyra	Seattle, WA	1722
176	David Poxson	Dewitt, MI	1721
176	Martin Jordö	Mölnlycke, Sweden	1721
178	David Stone	Stockton, CA	1720
178	John Hunks	Norton, OH	1720
178	Rudy Edwards	Fayetteville, NC	1720
181	Caroline Liu	Los Angeles, CA	1719
181	John Impellizzeri	Coral Gables, FL	1719
181	Jonathan Barnato	Vacaville, CA	1719
181	Lance Tokuda	Austin, TX	1719
181	Mark Venhaus	Hawthorne, CA	1719
181	Max Baerncope	Portland, OR	1719
181	Ryan Aldridge	–	1719
188	Chris Dodson	Atlanta, GA	1718
188	Derik Mortimer	Gladstone, OR	1718
188	Hashim Bello	Jamaica, NY	1718
188	Ian Jackson	–	1718
188	Randy Buehler	Falcon Heights, MN	1718
188	Richard Whipple	Arlington, TX	1718
194	Adam Hunt	North Benton, OH	1717
194	Bryan Sammon	Carrollton, TX	1717
194	Jordan Webb	Gladstone, OR	1717
194	Paul Gallagher	Austin, TX	1717
194	Trenton Pratt	Rockford, IL	1717
199	David Doust	Miami, FL	1716
199	Eric Taylor	Freeport, IL	1716
199	Eric Wenokor	Brooklyn, NY	1716
199	Sean Baker	Schaumburg, IL	1716
200	Andrew Wills	Ann Arbor, MI	1710
200	Cliff Hirtle	Hudson, NH	1710
200	David Carrin Jr.	Jacksonville, FL	1710
200	David Rose	Philadelphia, PA	1710
200	John Boyd	Maynard, MA	1710

From a Field of 125, Australia's Tom Chanpheng Emerges as No. 1

by Jeff J. Lin

Tom Chanpheng couldn't believe it.

"I got the card, I got the card! I can't believe it!" he said following the awards ceremony where he was presented the one-of-a-kind 1996 World Champion **Magic** card and trophy, as well as $26,000 in cash. Chanpheng, a little-known 19-year-old student from Brisbane, Australia, had just swept 1995 World Championship semifinalist and 1995 U.S. National Champion Mark Justice of West Valley City, Utah, 3–0, in the finals of the 1996 **Magic: The Gathering** World Championships. The Championships were held on August 18 at the Wizards of the Coast Tournament Center in Renton, Washington.

A total of 125 competitors, representing 28 different countries, dueled against the world's best **Magic** players. But in the end, Chanpheng outdueled them all. It seemed like he could do no wrong that day. Take, for instance, the crucial (and back-breaking) second game during the finals. After winning the first duel, Chanpheng, playing a white-weenie deck against Justice's red-black Necro deck, had mana problems (due in no small part to several Strip Mines on Justice's part, which stripped away his first two plains). With no colored mana available, Justice pounded on Chanpheng with a couple of Black Knights until the life totals stood at 22–5. Chanpheng would stave off death for several turns, however, with a Zuran Orb and by drawing a Mishra's Factory and a Strip Mine at just the right time.

With Balance in his hand, Chanpheng finally drew his third plains of the game, laid it down and cast Balance—wiping out both Justice's creatures and all of his lands. "I was about to concede, I thought I had no chance, but I drew the right cards," Chanpheng said. "I drew Strip Mine to animate my Mishra's Factories. I drew another one, and really needed the plains, and I drew the plains."

In response to Balance, Justice executed a bizarre move—he cast two Demonic Consultations simultaneously, both for Dark Rituals. "I felt if I could draw the Dark Rituals, I could get out Ihsan's Shade and it'd be the game, because he had nothing that could take care of an Ihsan's Shade," Justice explained. "I knew I still had to have a land [to cast Ihsan's Shade], but I figured I'd get the two Dark Rituals, and I'd draw a land within one or two or maybe three turns."

What ended up happening, however, was that Justice didn't get the second Dark Ritual until he'd removed all but four cards from his library. With his land gone and no way of winning within four turns, Justice conceded two turns later. "There was a lot of suspense," said Chanpheng. "[While Justice was using his Demonic Consultation] it was like he had a gun to my head."

"I didn't expect it [the second Dark Ritual] to be at the bottom of the deck—because there were four Dark Rituals left [when I Consulted]," Justice said.

"I felt that I had to win right then because I only had half my mana remaining in my deck, and he had a lot because he hadn't been drawing any. I was really low on creatures—I only had three Black Knights and four Hypnotic Specters [in the deck]—and two of them had just got "Balanced" away. I had two Ihsan's Shades, so I was thinking, 'If I just go one by one by one, he's going to beat me,' and I bet you he would have.

"What I should've done—if I was going to go kooky and take a chance like that—is Consult for a Strip Mine three turns earlier, stripped the Mishra's Factories, hit him, boom he's dead—but two Strip Mines were already gone, so the odds were 1-in-36 that both Strip Mines would be in the first six.

"It was a judgment call and I made the wrong call. It happens. If it goes off right, I look like a genius. If it doesn't, well . . . "

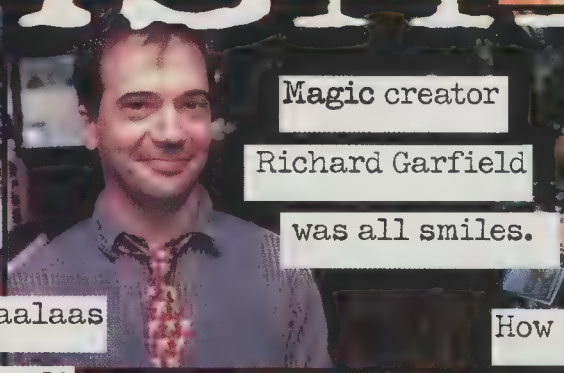
For all of the second game's suspense, the third game was quite anticlimactic. Justice drew only one swamp while Chanpheng got his deck rolling, throwing out five White Knights and Order of Leitburs. The game lasted all of seven turns.

Once Chanpheng won, his teammates from Team Australia/New Zealand rushed into the championship room and carried him out on their shoulders into the spectators' area to much applause and cheering from the crowd that

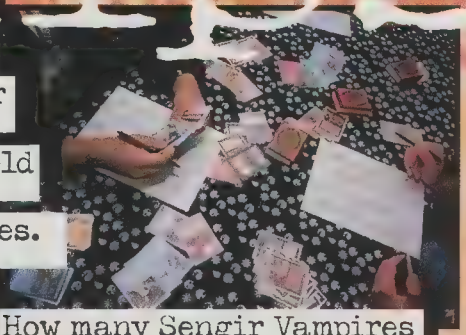
Magic Worldships

by Jeff J. Lin

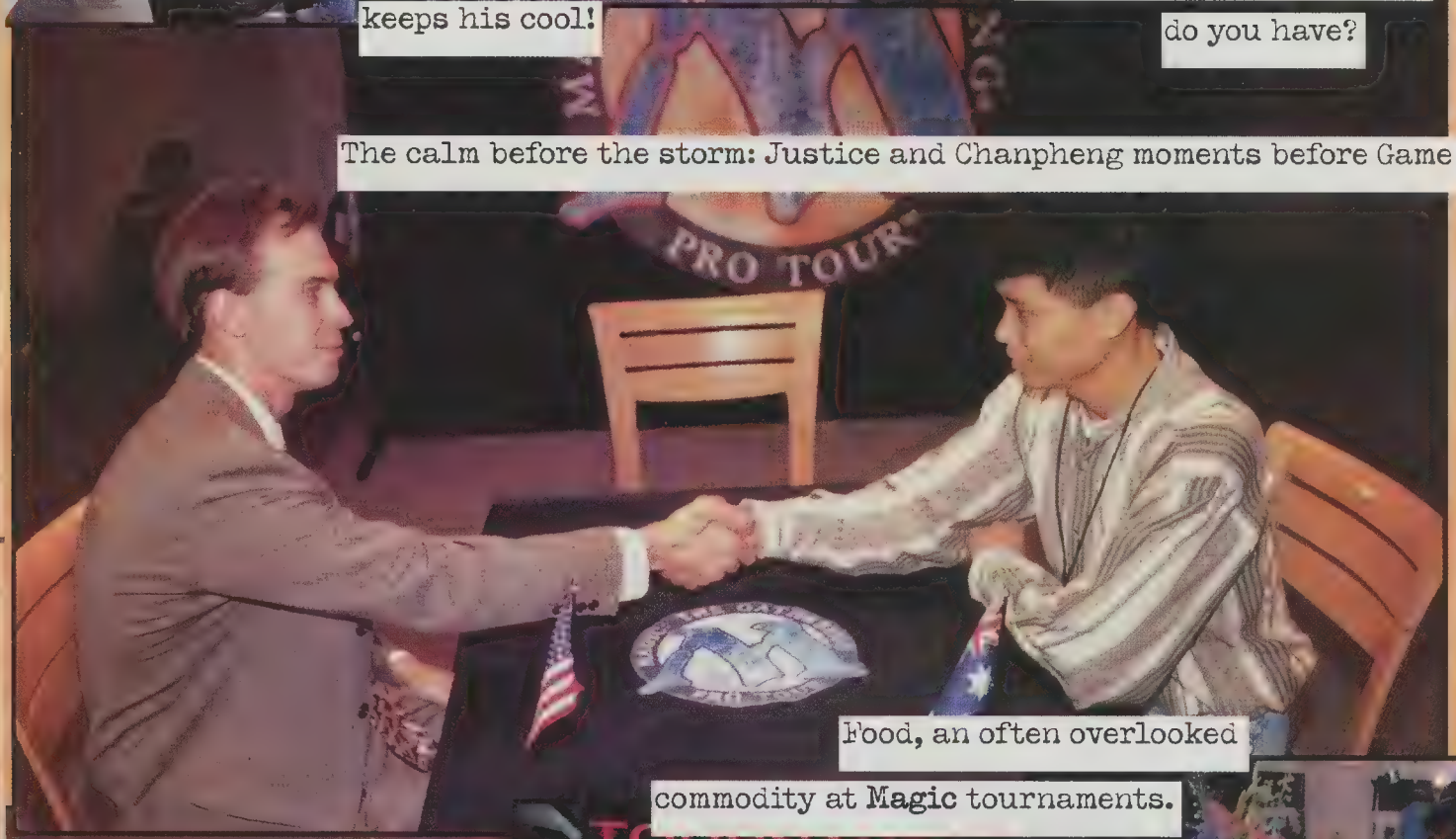
WotC Events Art Director Rich Kaalaas keeps his cool!



Magic creator Richard Garfield was all smiles.

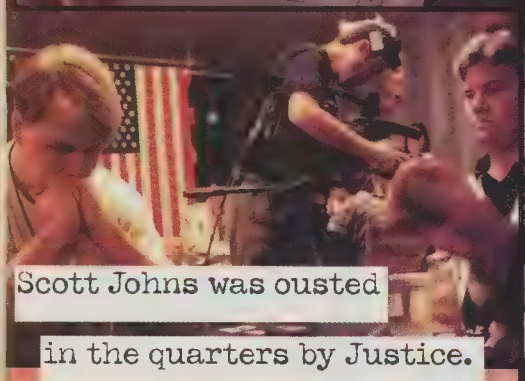


How many Sengir Vampires do you have?



The calm before the storm: Justice and Chanpheng moments before Game 1.

Food, an often overlooked commodity at **Magic** tournaments.



Scott Johns was ousted in the quarters by Justice.

WotC Events Marketing Manager David Hoppe shows the way.

had gathered to watch. One would have to wonder if the group's enthusiastic response had just as much to do with the fact that a Necropotence deck lost as with the fact that Chanpheng had just won the World title.

"I couldn't let Necro win, I really couldn't," Chanpheng said. The Australian defeated four Necropotence decks in the course of the tournament, including a 3–0 romp over 1995 World semifinalist Henry Stern of Los Angeles in the semifinals.

Once again, Necro decks dominated the Standard (Type II) competition, far and away the most prevalent of any deck type. Of the Top 8 finalists, three of the players—Justice, Stern, and Johns of Northridge, CA—were playing Necro decks.

The 1996 World Championships were the most rigorous competition yet: three days of six rounds of Swiss-style competition, with a different format for each day: *Fourth Edition/Homelands* Booster Draft the first day; Standard (Type II) constructed-deck on the second day; and Classic Restricted (Type 1.5) constructed-deck the third day. The Top 8 finishers advanced to the single-elimination finals.

After the first two days of play, Stern had grabbed the lead and seemed unstoppable, posting an 11–1 match record and losing only six games total between the two days. It was Stern's last sanctioned tournament *(see bio on page 22)*, and it seemed like he might pull off a stunt like chess king Bobby Fischer did—win it all, and then immediately retire from competition. But it was not to be. Stern, who made it to the semifinals at last year's Worlds, made it that far again, but no further. Chanpheng would not be denied.

The Classic Restricted (Type 1.5) competition was the most interesting. This was the first professional tournament to use the format (basically Classic (Type I) with no cards from the Type I and Type II Banned and Restricted Lists allowed), and it showed. Most players hadn't foreseen the new Channel/Fireball instant-win combo, which several competitors took advantage of: *Alliances* Storm Cauldron with Fastbond and Drain Life (plus one swamp). The combination prompted more than one losing competitor to slam their decks down in frustration.

With by far the most number of competitors in the World Championships and four players making the Top 8, the U.S. again dominated the tournament. But for the second year in a row, a non-American walked away with the World Championship title. Last year's champion, Alexander Blumke of Switzerland, finished 16th overall.

Justice had hoped to stop the trend, but was philosophical about the loss. "I'm satisfied in the sense that I took second," he said, thinking about next year. "I guess the only good thing to come out of it is it'll give me something to work for—and keep me hungry."

DAY 1 (August 14, Booster Draft)
Top Place-Finishers

1. Mark Chalice (USA)	12 (6-0)
2. Jakub Slemr (The Czech Republic)	12 (6-0)
3. Mark Justice (USA)	10 (5-1)
4. Mark Venhaus (USA)	10 (5-1)
5. Paul McCabe (Canada)	10 (5-1)
6. Au Yeung Hon Ming (Hong Kong)	10 (5-1)
7. Alexander Blumke (Switzerland)	10 (5-1)
8. Matthew Place (USA)	10 (5-1)
9. Oliver Krebs (Germany)	10 (5-1)
10. Javier Garavito (USA)	10 (5-1)
11. Henry Stern (USA)	10 (5-1)
12. Ondrej Bavdys (The Czech Republic)	10 (5-1)
13. Erno Ekebom (Finland)	10 (5-1)

DAY 2 (August 15, Type II)
Top Place-Finishers

1. Henry Stern (USA)	12 (6-0)
2. Eric Tam (Canada)	11 (5-0-1)
3. Tommi Hovi (Finland)	10 (5-1)
4. Jon Finkel (USA)	10 (5-1)
5. Erno Ekebom (Finland)	10 (5-1)
6. Andreo Nyborg (Denmark)	10 (5-1)
7. Amiel Feldman (Switzerland)	10 (5-1)
8. Satoshi Nakamura (Japan)	10 (5-1)
9. Olle Rade (Sweden)	10 (5-1)
10. Guilherme Couto Vila (Brazil)	10 (5-1)
11. Tom Chanpheng (Aus/NZ)	10 (5-1)
12. Michael Dove (USA)	10 (5-1)
13. Peter Radonjic (Canada)	10 (5-1)
14. [illegible]	10 (5-1)

DAY 3 (August 16, Type 1.5)
Top Place-Finishers

1. Scott Johns (USA)	12 (6-0)
2. Matthew Place (USA)	11 (5-0-1)
3. Leon Lindbach (Sweden)	10 (5-1)
4. Niklas Eriksson (Sweden)	10 (5-1)
5. Olle Rade (Sweden)	10 (5-1)
6. Tommi Hovi (Finland)	10 (5-1)
7. Bertrand Lestree (France)	10 (5-1)
8. Mark Justice (USA)	10 (5-1)
9. Sven Runing (Sweden)	10 (5-1)
10. Thomas Andersson (Sweden)	10 (5-1)
11. Darwin Kastle (USA)	10 (5-1)
12. Tom Chanpheng (Aus/NZ)	10 (5-1)
13. Homero Caballero (Mexico)	10 (5-1)

INDIVIDUAL RESULTS

1996 Magic World Championships Individual Standings August 14–18.

FINALS

Tom Chanpheng defeated Mark Justice, 3-0

SEMIFINALS

Mark Justice defeated Olle Råde, 3-1
Tom Chanpheng defeated Henry Stern, 3-0

QUARTERFINALS

Olle Råde defeated Tommi Hovi, 2-0
Mark Justice defeated Scott Johns, 2-0
Tom Chanpheng defeated Matthew Place, 2-1
Henry Stern defeated Eric Tam, 2-1

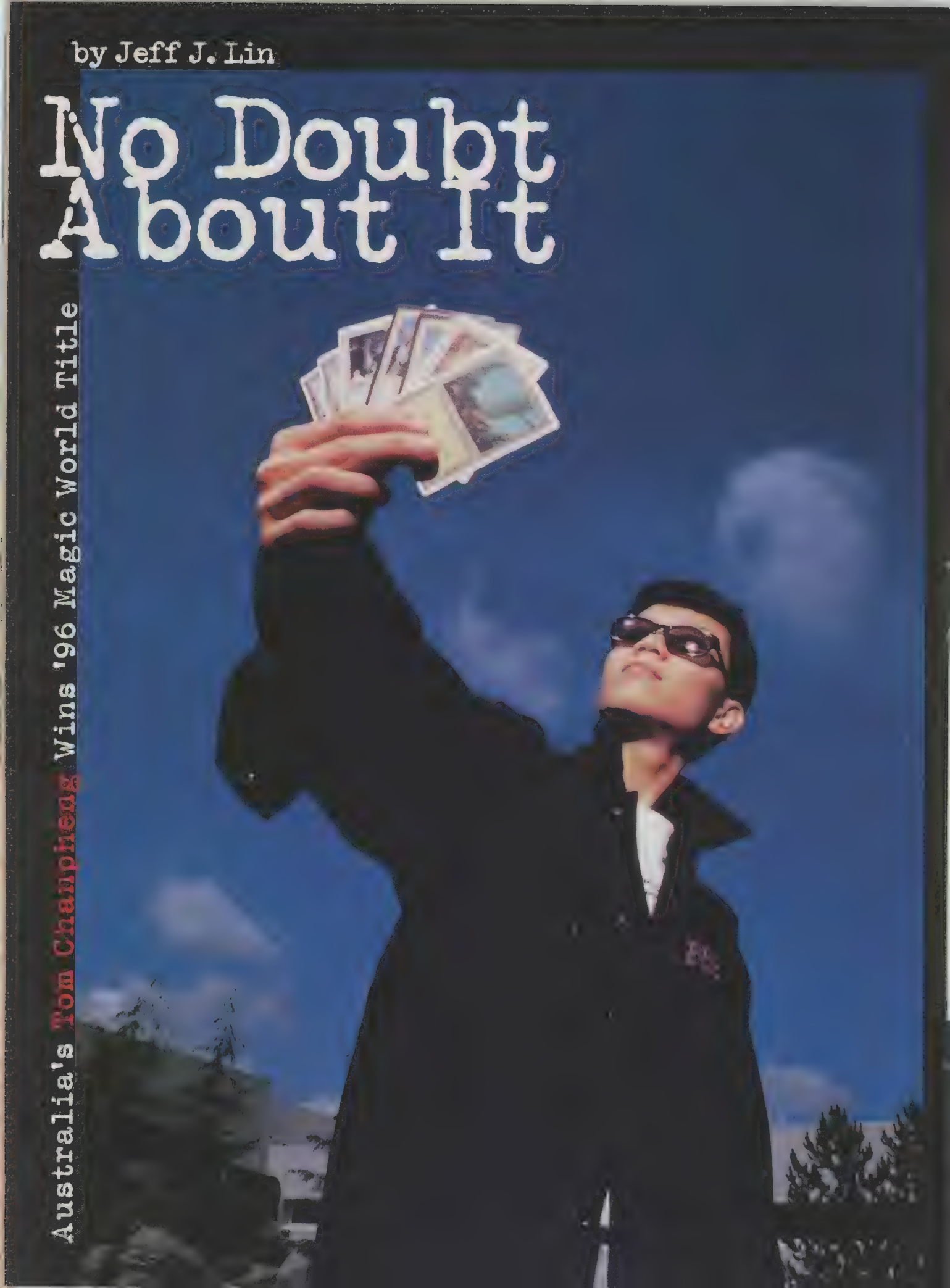
INDIVIDUAL STANDINGS FOLLOWING DAY 3:

		MATCH POINTS	GAME POINTS
1.	Olle Råde (Sweden)	30	77
2.	Henry Stern (USA)	30	72
3.	Matthew Place (Team USA)	29	73
4.	Scott Johns (USA)	29	75
5.	Mark Justice (USA)	28	72
6.	Tom Chanpheng (Team Aus/NZ)	28	72
7.	Eric Tam (Team Canada)	27	68
8.	Tommi Hovi (Team Finland)	26	64
9.	Jon Finkel (USA)	26	70
10.	Leon Lindbach (Team Sweden)	26	72
11.	Mark Chalice (USA)	26	72
12.	Paul McCabe (Canada)	26	70
13.	Erno Ekebom (Finland)	26	76
14.	Toshiki Tsukamoto (Japan)	24	64
15.	Michael Long (Team USA)	24	65
16.	Alexander Blumke (Team Switzerland)	24	66
17.	Andreas Nyborg (Team Denmark)	24	68
18.	Jakub Slemr (Team Czech Rep.)	24	66
19.	David Korejtko (Team Czech Rep.)	24	64
20.	Homero Caballero (Team Mexico)	23	64
21.	Peter Radonjic (Team Canada)	23	70
22.	Peter Gysemans (Team Belgium)	22	58
23.	Amiel Feldman (Team Switzerland)	22	62
24.	Guilherme Vila Couto (Team Brazil)	22	58
25.	Thomas Andersson (Team Sweden)	22	62
26.	Ryan Rusaw (Canada)	22	58
27.	Alvaro Marques (Canada)	22	60
28.	Ondrej Dvorak (Team Czech Rep.)	22	66
29.	Toszegi Szabolcs (Team Hungary)	22	58
30.	Darwin Mess-Kastle (USA)	22	57
31.	Rob Salmon (UK/Ireland)	22	60
32.	Michael Dove (USA)	22	56
33.	Oliver Krebs (Germany)	22	62
34.	Javier Garavito (USA)	22	64
35.	Marc Hernandez (France)	22	66
36.	Michael Loconto (USA)	22	66
37.	Yoshiyuki Tsuruta, Japan	20	61
38.	Niclas Eriksson (Sweden)	20	59
39.	Franze Couderc (Team France)	20	58
40.	Sturla Bingen (Team Norway)	20	54
41.	Atilla Bakos (Team Hungary)	20	50
42.	Rune Spaich (Team Denmark)	20	68
43.	Andrea Pacelli (Team Italy)	20	62
44.	Raffy Lirag (Team Philippines)	20	60
45.	David Van Dijck (Team Belgium)	19	54
46.	Chris Schneider (UK/Ireland)	19	54
47.	Svend Guerrero Geertsen (Denmark)	19	54
48.	Adam Greta (USA)	19	60
49.	Henning Kuhnt (Team Germany)	18	54
50.	Craig Shepard (Aus/NZ)	18	56
51.	Dennis Bentley (Team USA)	18	56
52.	Au Yeung Hon Ming (Team Hong Kong)	18	53
53.	Bertrand Lestrée (France)	18	54
54.	Roy Aberkrom (Team Netherlands)	18	57
55.	Sven Reming (Team Sweden)	18	50
56.	George Baxter (Team USA)	18	51
57.	Frederick Lenoir (Team Switzerland)	18	56
58.	Thomas Jensen (Team Denmark)	18	66
59.	John Immordino (USA)	18	60
60.	Michael Suwald (Team Switzerland)	18	48
61.	Viktor Rovo (Team Hungary)	18	54
62.	Preston Poulter (USA)	18	60
63.	Stephan Volkyser (Team Germany)	18	50
64.	Freek ten Cate (Team Netherlands)	18	56
65.	Frank Gilson (USA)	18	54
66.	Mark Venhaus (USA)	18	60
67.	Terry Lau (Team Canada)	18	52
68.	Dag Lokkebakken (Team Norway)	18	52
69.	Tomas Larrson (Team Sweden)	18	62
70.	Fabiano de Cesaro e Cunha (Team Brazil)	18	48
71.	Silvere Bonhomme (Team France)	18	48
72.	Harry van der Laan (Team Netherlands)	17	50
73.	Miguel Gonzalez (Team Spain)	17	57
74.	Werner van der Haeghen (Team Belgium)	17	46
75.	Shawn "Hammer" Regnier (USA)	17	54
76.	Peer Kroeger (Team Germany)	16	56
77.	Adam Maysonet (USA)	16	55
78.	Joseph Tan (Team Aus/NZ)	16	56
79.	Enrique Radamilans (Team Mexico)	16	50
80.	Jean Baptiste Confet (Team France)	16	52
81.	Sean Fleischman (USA)	16	58
82.	Clemens Kadrik (Team Austria)	16	54
83.	Dan Horning (Sweden)	16	50
84.	Tom De Wildt (Team Netherlands)	16	52
85.	Satoshi Nakamura (Team Japan)	16	47
86.	Larvanko Lasse (Team Finland)	16	46
87.	David Lie (Team Norway)	16	48
88.	Gustavo Chatella (Team Mexico)	16	44
89.	Walter Herzig (Team Austria)	16	52
90.	Dario Solari (Team Italy)	16	46
91.	Neil Guthrie (Sweden)	15	48
92.	Frederick Ong (Team Philippines)	15	40
93.	Alfonso Lopez (Team Spain)	15	36
94.	Eli Rusman (Team Israel)	15	44
95.	Hjalti Andrason (Team Iceland	15	44
96.	Christian Peschta (Team Austria)	15	49
97.	Markus Lagerstrom (Team Sweden)	14	46
98.	Raul Abreu de Assis (Team Brazil)	14	42
99.	Ryutaro Yamaguchi (Team Japan)	14	48
100.	Andrea Redi (Team Italy)	14	46
101.	Jason Zito (USA)	14	42
102.	Rory Hession (UK/Ireland)	14	44
103.	Andreas Weiss (Switzerland)	13	46
104.	Johan Moller (Team Iceland)	13	40
105.	Miklos Tihor (Team Hungary)	13	46
106.	Le Minh (Team France)	13	48
107.	Harri Vuorela (Team Finland)	13	51
108.	Guomundur Viggosson (Team Iceland)	12	36
109.	Chris Hudson (Team Aus/NZ)	12	42
110.	Aurelio de Goeiroz (Team Brazil)	12	46
111.	Gary Krakower (Team Canada)	12	49
112.	Steve Lamb (Team UK/Ireland)	12	42
113.	Antoine Rottiers (Team Belgium)	12	48
114.	David Lilleoren (Team Norway)	12	46
115.	David Seo (Team Korea)	11	35
116.	Thomas Mistelberger (Team Austria)	10	36
117.	Arturo Rueda (Team Mexico)	10	42
118.	Lucas Kocourek (Team Czech Rep.)	10	38
119.	Erling Hansson (Team Iceland)	10	34
120.	C. Kakaroogas (Team Greece)	10	34
121.	Gavrill Ioannis (Team Greece)	6	32
122.	Antonio Cardenas (Team Spain)	6	26
123.	Rui Miguel Sousa Cordeiro (Team Portugal)	6	26
124.	David Dominguez (Team Spain)	6	30
125.	Shachar Zriben (Team Israel)	6	28

by Jeff J. Lin

No Doubt About It

Australia's Tom Chapineau Wins '96 Magic World Title



"It's a dream just coming here to the Worlds and doing this good against so many excellent players. It's amazing.

You could say that Tom Chanpheng was hooked on **Magic** from his first game. A 19-year-old student at the Queensland University of Technology, he recalled his first contact with **Magic** in April of last year.

"My friends saw someone playing [the game]. We each bought one starter and two boosters of *Revised,* went over to a friend's place, and ended up playing eighteen hours straight. We were just hooked from then on."

Chanpheng had no idea that he would one day end up winning the 1996 **Magic** World Championships in Seattle, almost 9,000 miles away from his home in Brisbane, Australia.

Chanpheng's 3–0 sweep of 1995 World Championship semifinalist Mark Justice in the finals was the culminating step in the Aussie's dream run to the top of a tournament filled with the world's best **Magic** players. "[When I got here] I was aiming for the Top 32," he said. But after going 4–2 the first day and then posting 5–1 records in both the Type II and Type 1.5 rounds, he realized he was doing better than expected. "My expectations got higher and higher—I did pretty good, so maybe Top 16 . . . maybe Top 8 . . . maybe Top 4 so I can qualify for next year's Worlds . . . maybe, maybe to win the card now!"

The card in question was the 1996 World Champion card, a one-of-a-kind **Magic** card given to the winner—along with $26,000! Not bad for someone who'd played only in "about eight or nine" tournaments previous to the World Championships.

Chanpheng bucked the Necropotence trend, running white-weenie decks for both the Type II and Type 1.5 rounds. "I played Necro [at the Australian Nationals, finishing second], but I didn't want to play Necro here," he said. "I don't like Hymn to Tourachs and [the deck's] a bit vulnerable to Stasis and the new [Titania's] Song decks. I felt the white weenie could deal with everything."

Part of what helped him was his sideboard. "I think it's very important to make sure your deck can handle every other deck," he said. "You can't really have one weakness; you can't go into a tournament and say, 'Hopefully I won't come up against this deck because it'll beat me,' because you'll probably come up against three or four of them and they *will* beat you."

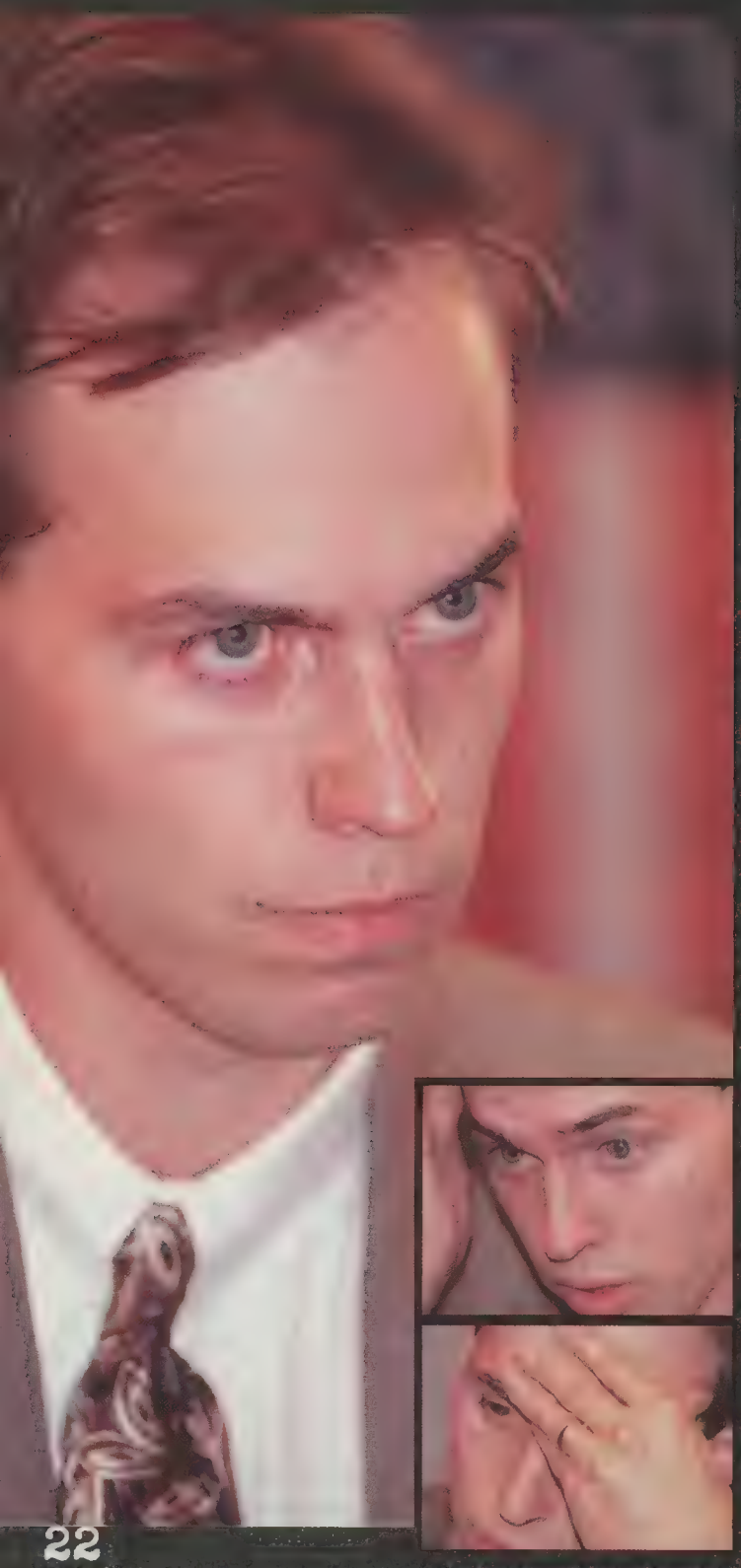
A complete unknown coming into the World Championships, Chanpheng seemed a bit shocked afterwards at what he had accomplished. "It's a dream just coming here to the Worlds and doing this good against so many excellent players. It's amazing," he said. "I played against Matt Place, Adam Maysonet, Mark Chalice . . . it's been an experience playing against people you read about in magazines like *The Duelist.* It's a thrill."

Following his decisive, 3–0 sweep of Justice in the finals, Chanpheng's Australian/New Zealand teammates gave their 19-year-old hero a free lift to the awards ceremony. ▼

Steam

by Jeff J. Lin

Mark Justice of the U.S. Falters in Finals, 3-0



There are many things you can say about Mark Justice. Being unprepared for the World Championships, however, is not one of them.

To those who may think that 26-year-old Justice (the '95 Magic U.S. National Champion and '95 World Championship semifinalist, and now 1996 Magic World Championship finalist) does so well because of innate ability or luck from beyond. That may be so, but don't forget good old-fashioned preparation.

"I poured *so much* time into this thing," the West Valley City, Utah, resident and baseball/Magic card store owner said. "I spent *hundreds* and *hundreds* and *hundreds* of hours [training for the World Championships].

"I mean that's what I did—I'm at a shop, so I go to work and the first thing I do is break open the Magic deck and start playing. I put in good 55-to-60-hour weeks over the last two months [preparing for this]."

All the hard work paid handsome dividends, though. Justice reprised his performance at last year's World Championships, once again making it to the Final 4, but this time he moved one step closer (he'd lost to eventual 1995 champion Alexander Blumke in the semifinals last year) by advancing past Sweden's Olle Råde, 3-1.

After losing the first game of the finals against Tom Chanpheng, Justice came back and had Chanpheng down to 5 life and on the ropes in the second duel—until Chanpheng drew and cast Balance. *(For details on this match, see main story on page 16.)* In response, Justice cast two Demonic Consultations, both for Dark Rituals. He didn't get the second one until all but four cards remained in his library, and ended up losing the game.

"I'm playing like crap," he said after Game 2. "I'm not playing like I'm going for the World Championship, I'm in the back of the store, going for ten bucks."

The third game and the World Championship title went quickly to Chanpheng. "It's such a bad matchup for me. He [Champheng] has all that protection from black creatures, [even if I won the second game] I'd have to get lucky the next two—I'd probably still lose," Justice said afterward. "So I don't feel that bad."

Justice's Necropotence deck *(see decklist on page 26)* contained a fair amount of red, different from his Necro deck at Nationals in July, which had contained only one non-black spell: Balance. Here, his sideboard contained Shatters and Pyroblasts in addition to Fireball in the main deck. "I was very much slanted toward [beating] Stasis [decks]," he explained. "Half my sideboard was against Stasis. I wanted to be able to take care of Stasis if I ran into that." And how many Stasis decks did he meet over the four days? "None."

For his efforts, Justice collected $16,000 and looked upon the finals as a learning experience.

"Magic's such a complex game that you never run into the same situation very often; stuff like that when he has a Balance and I have two [Demonic Consultations]," he said. "That's the first time that's happened to me, but once again, that's what makes a good Magic player better. They learn—they learn from those situations, and the next time they know what to do."

And what did he learn from the finals?

"When in doubt, consult for the Strip Mine."

Despite endless hours of preparation, Justice's strategy could not stop Chanpheng's tournament-winning white weenie deck.

Stern's Last Dance

Henry Stern was due. Stern, long considered one of the best players from the Los Angeles region, hadn't done well in any of the three preceding Pro Tour events this year. After finishing as a semifinalist at the 1995 **Magic** World Championships, Stern's name was noticeably absent from the top-place-finishers listings for each of the Pro Tour events in the 1995-96 season. His highest finish was 20th at the Pro Tour–Long Beach Booster Draft competition in May, and he didn't even make it to the Top 64 at the third professional tournament in Columbus, Ohio, in July.

Through the opening stages of the 1996 Magic World Championships, though, it seemed like Stern would break his slump. Dominating the opening two days of play, he finished the Swiss-style rounds seeded second behind eventual fellow semifinalist Olle Råde of Sweden. "Through the Swiss rounds, I was hot," said Stern, 28. "In the Booster Draft, I felt like I really achieved a lot without many tools. I had some good cards, but no real impact cards, and still managed to go 5–1. In the Type II competition, I was on fire. No one could get in my way. In the [Type] 1.5, I had to go 3–3 [to make the Final 8]; I had a good deck and went 4–2."

Stern, playing a Necropotence deck, continued his march through Sunday's quarterfinal round, beating former Canadian National Champion Eric Tam 2–1. "I had an ungodly first game—Strip, Strip, Strip, Hymn, Hymn, Necro, forget it."

But in the semifinals, Stern's good fortune ended. He faced Australia's Tom Chanpheng, who was playing a white-weenie deck. Mana problems in the first two games resulted in quick victories for the Aussie, and Stern never recovered in the third game as Chanpheng went on to sweep him 3–0.

This year's World Championships, however, marked Stern's final sanctioned tournament. Newly hired into Wizards of the Coast's Research and Development group, Stern is now prohibited from playing in sanctioned events.

And though he didn't go out quite the way he wanted, Stern wasn't complaining. "I'm ecstatic to have made it this far; it's a tough tournament," he said. "To make it to the Final 8 is fantastic; to make it to the Final 4, I really can't complain at all.

"It would have been nice to have made it into the finals and played [fellow Pacific Coast Legends teammate Mark] Justice. That would have been something special," he added, "but the Final 4 two years in a row? I'll take that."

Råde Reigns No More

Olle Råde had just lost in the semifinals at the 1996 World Championships, but he didn't seem to mind.

Then again, how upset would you be if you had accomplished what he had in the last two months? Råde, 17, from Göteborg, Sweden, has made quite a mark on the Pro Tour circuit since his debut in July. His high finish at the 1996 World Championships even garnered him enough overall points to vault past expected winner Shawn "Hammer" Regnier for the 1996 Pro Tour Player of the Year award.

This year's World Championships marked the second consecutive Pro Tour event that Råde finished inside the Top 4—he won the third Magic professional tournament in Columbus last July, an *Ice Age/Alliances* constructed-deck affair. Incredibly, he hadn't even qualified for the previous two Pro Tour events.

After defeating Tommi Hovi of Finland in the quarterfinals, 2–0, Råde lost to eventual runner-up Mark Justice, 3–1. Råde played what appeared to be a green-white Erhnam Djinn/Armageddon deck. "It's not really an "Erhnamgeddon"—more like a green weenie with white," he said. "Twenty-two creatures, only two Armageddons." *(See decklist on page 24.)*

As a relative unknown, Råde was aware that a lot of people thought he was lucky to have won at Pro Tour–Columbus. But by finishing in the semifinals at the Worlds and being the No. 1 seed heading into the quarterfinals, Råde laid much of that speculation to rest. "I know," he said, referring to some of the other players' skepticism of his skill. "I played my *Ice Age/Alliances* deck yesterday when I played some of the guys. I played [one guy], and he said, 'You were lucky at Pro Tour [3],' but I took him again, 2–1."

ANALYZING THE DECKS

TOM CHANPHENG (Champion)

Tom Chanpheng's deck was a modified white weenie. Four Savannah Lions and eight Knights gave him an extremely fast start—he could almost always put out a 2/1 or 2/2 creature on his first or second turn. Phyrexian War Beasts and Serra Angels backed up the small creatures with a bit more muscle; against other white weenies, Chanpheng commented, the Serra Angels won it for him. Phyrexian War Beasts also helped against Necrodecks, since they can block the protection from white creatures.

The deck was supposed to contain Adarkar Wastes, to provide a bit of blue to power Sleight of Mind against cards like Dystopia. Unfortunately, Chanpheng accidentally wrote fifteen plains on his decklist instead of eleven plains and four Adarkar Wastes. When he discovered the mistake, he was required to change his deck to conform to the decklist. That meant that he started each match with one "uncastable" card in his deck.

When asked why he chose this deck for the Worlds, Chanpheng said, "I played it because it really didn't have any weaknesses. It's nice and solid."

MARK JUSTICE (Finalist)

HENRY STERN (Semifinalist)

SCOTT JOHNS (Quarterfinalist)

Out of the 125 decks played in the Standard (Type II) competition, forty-six were Necropotence decks; so it's no surprise that three of them made the Top 8. Since the basic Necro strategy has already been thoroughly analyzed, it's interesting to look at the differences between these three constructions.

Mark Justice added a touch of red by using Lava Tubes, Sulfurous Springs, and City of Brass. This allowed him to use one Fireball in his main deck. Since it can be split among multiple targets, Fireball is much better than Drain Life against weenie decks; it can also kill the protection from black creatures which most Necrodecks can only stop with Nevinyrral's Disks and Serrated Arrows. And, of course, it works just as well as Drain Life as a game-ender. The red also allowed him to sideboard three Shatters for use against artifact-based decks, and some countering ability against blue (Pyroblasts). Justice also chose to use only Black Knights instead of the more fragile 2/1 "pump" Knights.

Henry Stern played a fairly classic Necrodeck, other than using Snow-Covered Swamps which allowed him to bring in Withering Wisps. He discovered that Withering Wisps gave him an edge when he played against other Necrodecks. He also included one Yotian Soldier to help against "Turbo/Stasis" and weenie decks, but said afterward: "It really wasn't a good choice. I would have been better off with something else—another knight, something." The deck was supposed to include one Ihsan's Shade and one Sengir Vampire, but due to a mistake in writing down his decklist, he ended up with two Sengir Vampires and no Ihsan's Shade.

Scott Johns modified the basic Necro design by adding Icequakes. "I'm not normally a very big fan of Icequakes in the Necrodeck," he said, "but there are two reasons why I used them in this tournament." First, he expected to see a lot of other Necrodecks, and found that Icequakes gave him a resource advantage when playing against Necro. Secondly, he expected the players who didn't use Necrodecks to be well prepared with various anti-Necro strategies, and he didn't think he could prepare for all of them in his starting deck. So he used Icequakes to disrupt their game as much as possible, then swapped them for more appropriate sideboard cards depending on what he was facing.

OLLE RÅDE (Semifinalist)

At first glance, **Olle Råde**'s deck looked like a fairly standard "Erhnageddon" (Erhnam Djinn/Armageddon) deck. Those who took it for one, however, were in for a rude awakening. Using twenty-two creatures, eighteen of them costing only one or two mana to summon, Råde's deck was really more of a weenie deck with Erhnam Djinns for added muscle. "Many creatures are hard to beat," he said. Four Giant Growths, used strategically, often allowed his weenies to kill larger creatures or survive direct damage. Råde also used four Disenchants and one Divine Offering in his main deck, rather than starting out with most of them in his sideboard as is often done.

MATTHEW PLACE (Quarterfinalist)

Matthew Place's deck was much closer to the typical Erhnageddon. Besides the Erhnam Djinns, his only creatures were Fyndhorn Elves, Llanowar Elves, Whirling Dervishes, and Deadly Insects. Whirling Dervishes gave Necrodecks headaches, while Deadly Insects, though fairly useless against Necro's creatures with first strike, were very strong against creature-poor decks. (And with four Serrated Arrows and four Icy Manipulators, he could sometimes clear away the creatures with first strike long enough to allow Deadly Insects to get in some hits.) Thawing Glaciers helped Place restore his mana quickly after casting Armageddon. He also used Icy Manipulators to tap his opponents' lands and keep them short on mana.

ERIC TAM (Quarterfinalist)

Eric Tam's deck focused on land destruction and direct damage, with just a few hard-hitting creatures. "I didn't create this deck," Tam was quick to point out. "It was created by Dennis Bentley and Gary Krakower. I'm just giving credit

by Beth Moursund

where credit's due." He did, however, make a number of changes to the original design. The deck was built primarily to be strong against Necrodecks—to hit fast and hard, dealing enough damage and destroying enough lands that even if his opponents got out Necropotence they wouldn't be able to take much advantage of it. Tam didn't expect the deck to do as well against white-green decks, but found that even against them his early land destruction was often disruptive enough to bring him victory.

TOMMI HOVI (Quarterfinalist)

Tommi Hovi, one of the originators of the "Turbo/Stasis" deck, proved at the Worlds that the deck is strong enough to stand even against opponents who have heard of the deck and had a chance to prepare for it. The Turbo/Stasis deck has so many required cards that there's very little room for variation. Hovi added Balance and Land Tax, and replaced the usual Feldon's Cane with Soldevi Digger. Balance provided excellent defense before the lock was established, removing a fast-starting opponent's army or discarding most of a slow-starting opponent's hand, while Land Tax allowed him to build up a large land supply to keep Stasis fed. Soldevi Digger, though more costly than Feldon's Cane, allowed him to repeatedly recycle the critical cards that he needed.

Type II Quarterfinalists' Decklists

TOM CHANPHENG
1 Armageddon
1 Balance
4 Disenchant
1 Kjeldoran Outpost
1 Land Tax
1 Lodestone Bauble
4 Mishra's Faxctory
1 Order of Leitbur
4 Order of the White Shield
2 Phyrexion War Beast
1 Reinforcements
1 Reprisal
4 Savannah Lions
2 Serra Angel
1 Sleight of Mind
4 Strip Mine
4 Swords to Plowshares
4 White Knight
1 Zuran Orb
15 Plains

Sideboard
2 Arenson's Aura
1 Black Vise
4 Divine Offering
1 Energy Storm
1 Exile
1 Kjeldoran Outpost
1 Reprisal
2 Serrated Arrows
1 Sleight of Mind
1 Spirit Link

MARK JUSTICE
3 Black Knight
1 City of Brass
3 Contagion
4 Dark Ritual
3 Drain Life
1 Fireball
4 Hymn to Tourach
4 Hypnotic Specter
2 Ihsan's Shade
1 Ivory Tower
1 Lava Tube
3 Mishra's Factory
2 Order of the Ebon Hand
4 Necropotence
3 Nevinyrral's Disk
2 Serrated Arrows
4 Strip Mine
4 Sulfurous Springs
1 Zuran Orb
10 Swamp

Sideboard
1 Contagion
2 Demonic Consultation
4 Dystopia
2 Infernal Darkness
2 Pyroblast
1 Red Elemental Blast
3 Shatter

HENRY STERN
2 Contagion
4 Dark Ritual
3 Drain Life
4 Hymn to Tourach
4 Hypnotic Specter
1 Ivory Tower
4 Knight of Stromgald
4 Mishra's Factory
3 Necropotence
1 Sengir Vampire
2 Serrated Arrows
18 Snow-Covered Swamp
4 Strip Mine
1 Vampire
1 Yotian Soldier
1 Zuran Orb

Sideboard
2 Contagion
1 Dark Banishing
1 Demonic Consultation
4 Dystopia
3 Infernal Darkness
1 Terror
2 Withering Wisps
1 Yotian Soldier

SCOTT JOHNS
3 Contagion
4 Dark Ritual
3 Drain Life
4 Hymn to Tourach
4 Hypnotic Specter
4 Icequake
1 Ivory Tower
4 Knight of Stromgald
2 Mishra's Factory
4 Necropotence
3 Nevinyrral's Disk
4 Strip Mine
2 Vampire
1 Zuran Orb
18 Swamp

Sideboard
1 Contagion
2 Dance of the Dead
3 Dark Banishing
2 Demonic Consultation
4 Dystopia
2 Infernal Darkness
1 Nevinyrral's Disk

OLLE RÅDE
2 Armageddon
1 Balance
4 Brushland
4 City of Brass
4 Disenchant
1 Divine Offering
4 Elvish Archers
4 Erhnam Djinn
2 Fyndhorn Elves
4 Giant Growth
1 Land Tax
2 Llanowar Elves
4 Savannah Lions
2 Spectral Bears
4 Strip Mine
4 Swords to Plowshares
4 Whirling Dervish
1 Zuran Orb
7 Forest
2 Plains

Sideboard
2 Circle of Protection: Black
2 Divine Offering
1 Energy Storm
1 Essence Filter
1 Karma
2 Lhurgoyf
2 Serrated Arrows
2 Winter Orb
2 Wrath of God

MATTHEW PLACE
4 Armageddon
1 Balance
4 Brushland
1 City of Brass
1 Deadly Insect
4 Disenchant
4 Erhnam Djinn
3 Fellwar Stone
2 Fyndhorn Elves
4 Icy Manipulator
1 Land Tax
1 Llanowar Elves
4 Serrated Arrows
4 Strip Mine
4 Swords to Plowshares
1 Sylvan Library
2 Thawing Glaciers
2 Whirling Dervish
1 Zuran Orb
6 Forest
6 Plains

Sideboard
2 Circle of Protection: Red
3 Crumble
3 Deadly Insect
1 Feldon's Cane
1 Ivory Tower
1 Jester's Cap
3 Karma
1 Whirling Dervish

ERIC TAM
1 Balance
1 Black Vise
4 City of Brass
2 Deadly Insect
2 Elkin Bottle
3 Erhnam Djinn
1 Eron the Relentless
1 Fellwar Stone
1 Fireball
2 Guerrilla Tactics
2 Icy Manipulator
4 Incinerate
4 Karplusan Forest
4 Lightning Bolt
2 Mishra's Factory
4 Pillage
1 Primitive Justice
3 Stone Rain
1 Storm Shaman
1 Stormbind
4 Strip Mine
12 Mountain

Sideboard
1 Anarchy
1 Ball Lightning
1 Dark Banishing
1 Earthquake
2 Gloom
2 Mountain Yeti
2 Primitive Justice
1 Pyroblast
2 Storm Seeker
1 Terror
1 Zuran Orb

TOMMI HOVI
3 Adarkar Wastes
4 Arcane Denial
1 Balance
4 Boomerang
2 City of Brass
3 Despotic Scepter
4 Force of Will
4 Howling Mine
1 Ivory Tower
2 Kismet
2 Land Cap
1 Land Tax
4 Lim-Dûl's Vault
2 Recall
2 River Delta
1 Soldevi Digger
4 Stasis
3 Underground River
1 Zuran Orb
12 Island

Sideboard
1 Black Vise
2 Circle of Protection: Black
2 Circle of Protection: Red
1 Feldon's Cane
1 Hurkyl's Recall
2 Hydroblast
1 Lodestone Bauble
2 Mana Short
3 Wall of Air

DAY 1-AUGUST 14, 1996

Booster Draft

TOP 8 DECKS

MARK CHALICE

1 Brothers of Fire
1 Cave People
1 Disenchant
3 Disintegrate
1 Eleven Riders
1 Fire Elemental
3 Giant Growth
1 Grapeshot Catapult
1 Gray Ogre
1 Grizzly Bears
1 Hill Giant
1 Ironclaw Orcs
1 Leaping Lizard
1 Llanowar Elves
1 Mesa Pegasus
1 Roterothopter
1 Serrated Arrows
1 Wall of Ice
7 Forest
8 Mountain
2 Plains

Sideboard

1 An-Havva Inn
1 Carapace
1 Conversion
1 Creature Bond
1 Cyclopean Mummy
1 Folk of An-Havva
1 Fortified Area
1 Greater Werewolf
1 Holy Strength
1 Mons's Goblin Raiders
1 Raise Dead
1 Sisters of the Flame
1 Trade Caravan
1 Tsunami
1 Wild Growth

JAKUB SLEMR

2 Aysen Bureaucrats
1 Clay Statue
1 Dragon Whelp
1 Dwarven Trader
1 Feast of the Unicorn
1 Fissure
2 Giant Strength
1 Healing Salve
1 Hill Giant
2 Ironclaw Orcs
1 Paralyze
1 Serra Bestiary
1 Shivan Dragon
3 Stone Rain
1 Terror
1 Torture
1 Unholy Strength
1 Weakness
9 Mountain
4 Plains
4 Swamp

Sideboard

1 Ambush
1 Ashnod's Battle Gear
1 Blue Ward
1 The Brute
2 Circle of Protection: Black
1 Dwarven Trader
1 Jump
1 Mana Flare
2 Marsh Gas
2 Mishra's War Machine
1 Red Elemental Blast
1 Word of Binding
2 Plains

MARK JUSTICE

2 Anaba Shaman
1 Apocalypse Chime
1 Brothers of Fire
1 Cave People
1 Cemetery Gate
1 Clay Statue
1 Craw Wurm
1 Dancing Scimitar
1 Disintegrate
1 Fireball
1 Grizzly Bears
1 Hungry Mist
1 Irini Sengir
1 Land Tax
1 Lost Soul
1 Pestilence
1 Rysorian Badger
1 Wall of Ice
1 War Mammoth
1 Whirling Dervish
1 Zombie Master
5 Forest
6 Mountain
1 Plains
6 Swamp

Sideboard

2 Alabaster Potion
1 Amrou Kithkin
1 Carapace
1 Circle of Protection: Black
4 Circle of Protection: Blue
1 Circle of Protection: Green
1 Circle of Protection: White
1 Energy Tap
1 Feedback
1 Island Fish Jasconius
1 Jump
1 Wall of Wood
2 Forest
2 Island
1 Mountain
6 Plains
1 Swamp

MARK VENHAUS

1 Anaba Bodyguard
1 Anaba Shaman
1 Battering Ram
2 Bird Maiden
1 Dark Maze
1 Earth Elemental
1 Earthquake
1 Fellwar Stone
1 Fissure
1 Flight
1 Flood
1 Giant Oyster
1 Giant Strenth
1 Giant Tortoise
1 Goblin Rock Sled
1 Mishra's Factory
1 Phantom Monster
2 Unstable Mutation
1 Unsummon
1 Wall of Stone
3 Zephyr Falcon
8 Island
8 Mountain

Sideboard

1 Alabaster Potion
1 Ambush Party
1 Apprentice Wizard
1 Aysen Bureaucrats
1 Benalish Hero
1 Circle of Protection: Blue
1 Cursed Rack
1 Merchant Scroll
1 Pikemen
1 Steal Artifact
1 Sunken City
1 Trade Caravan
1 Twiddle
2 Island
2 Mountain
6 Plains

PAUL MCCABE

1 Abbey Matron
1 Aladdin's Ring
1 Amulet of Kroog
1 Benalish Hero
1 Brass Man
1 Castle
1 Fireball
1 Giant Spider
1 Grapeshot Catapult
2 Grizzly Bears
1 Hungry Mist
1 Land Leeches
1 Leaping Lizard
1 Llanowar Elves
1 Mesa Falcon
2 Pikemen
2 Serrated Arrows
1 Shapeshifter
1 War Mammoth
1 Wrath of God
8 Forest
2 Mountain
7 Plains

Sideboard

1 Circle of Protection: White
1 Cosmic Horror
1 Energy Flux
1 Erosion
1 Fire Elemental
1 Irini Sengir
1 Lifetap
1 Mana Short
1 Memory Lapse
1 Power Leak
1 Sunken City
1 Tranquility
1 Tundra Wolves
1 Wall of Wood
1 Wild Growth
8 Forest
9 Swamp

Sideboard

1 Brainwash
1 Cemetery Gate
1 Drain Power
1 Erosion
1 Funeral March
1 Ghost Hounds
1 Hungry Mist
1 Jinx
1 Marsh Viper
1 Mons's Goblin Raiders
1 Stone Rain
1 Stream of Life
1 Unsummon
1 Willow Priestess
1 Wooden Sphere
3 Forest
3 Island
2 Swamp

AU YEUNG HON MING

1 Ambush Party
1 Battering Ram
1 Benalish Hero
1 Brothers of Fire
1 Death Ward
1 Giant Strength
1 Gray Ogre
1 Healing Salve
2 Hill Giant
1 Hurloon Minotaur
1 Ironclaw Orcs
1 Lightning Bolt
2 Mesa Falcon
1 Retribution
1 Samite Healer
1 Serra Angel
1 Shatter
3 Sisters of the Flame
1 Stone Giant
1 Stone Rain
12 Mountain
6 Plains

Sideboard

1 AEther Storm
1 Aspect of Wolf
1 Burrowing
1 Castle
1 Chain Stasis
1 Circle of Protection: Blue
1 Circle of Protection: White
1 Evaporate
1 Plague Rats
1 Red Elemental Blast
1 Seeker
1 Sunken City
1 Willow Faerie
2 Island
2 Plains

ALEXANDER BLUMKE

1 Amulet of Kroog
1 Apocalypse Chime
1 Colossus of Sardia
1 Coral Helm
1 Crumble
1 Dark Ritual
1 Ironfoot Treefolk
1 Killer Bees
1 Ley Druid
1 Mind Twist
2 Pestilence
1 Radjan Spirit
1 Raise Dead
1 Royal Assassin
1 Scryb Sprites
1 Spectral Bears
2 Spirit Shackle
1 Stream of Life
2 Wall of Brambles
1 Wild Growth

MATTHEW PLACE

1 Ambush Party
1 Anaba Shaman
1 Autumn Willow
1 Aysen Bureaucrats
1 Carnivorous Plant
1 Circle of Protection: Red
1 Durkwood Boars
1 Flood
1 Giant Spider
1 Grizzly Bears
1 Jayemdae Tome
1 Lightning Bolt
1 Osai Vultures
2 Power Sink
3 Prodigal Sorcerer
1 Sea Serpent
1 Segovian Leviathan
1 Shanodin Dryads
1 Wall of Spears
1 Wall of Water
5 Forest
7 Island
3 Mountain
3 Plains

Sideboard

1 Coral Reef
1 Dwarven Sea Clan
1 Fog
1 Fungusaur
1 Goblin Rock Sled
1 Island Fish Jasconius
1 Mammoth Harness
1 Marsh Viper
1 Memory Lapse
1 Morale
1 Psychic Venom
1 Relic Bind
1 Tranquility
1 White Mana Battery
1 Wild Growth
3 Forest
5 Island

ALMOST MADE IT

JON FINKEL (United States)

Jon Finkel played nearly the same "Turbo/Stasis" deck that made such a splash at the U.S. Nationals. His main variation was adding Balance to the deck. He often used Lim-Dûl's Vault to dig up Balance near the beginning of a duel. "It was more like 'Turbo/Balance' than Turbo/Stasis," he commented. "I kept on using Balance on my opponents in the third or fourth turn. I'd make them discard like four or five cards and really disrupt their strategy." Finkel also included one Disenchant in his main deck and three more in his sideboard; these worked well against the Winter Orbs and Energy Fluxes, which many players at Nationals hoped would wreck the Turbo/Stasis deck strategy.

ERNO EKEBOM (Finland)

Erno Ekebom's deck was a cross between a white weenie and a permission. Eleven small creatures (not to mention four Mishra's Factories) gave him a good chance of drawing one or two in his starting hand, allowing him to get in some fast damage against slower decks. Two Kjeldoran Outposts ensured a constant supply of backup troops against any player without land destruction. Serrated Arrows or Aelopiles took care of his opponent's small creatures, while Control Magic waited for the larger ones; Swords to Plowshares could take out anything the others missed. For countering, Ekebom had only three Power Sinks, but with his strong creature control he could afford to save them for serious non-creature threats.

ANDREAS NYBORG (Denmark)

Andreas Nyborg was one of the few high-placing players (other than those who used Necrodecks) to play a monochrome deck. His straight-red deck focused primarily on land destruction and big creatures, backed up by a bit of direct damage. Against his Stone Rain, Pillage, Fissure, and Strip Mine arrangement, opponents playing anything except weenie decks were hard-pressed to keep enough land on the table to cast any spells. Pillages and Fissures could also provide artifact and creature removal if needed; Lightning Bolts and Fireballs, however, were the main anti-creature spells. Nyborg would build up his own mana supply, and soon Dragon Whelp, Shivan Dragon, Orgg, or Eron the Relentless would arrive to pound on his defenseless opponent.

AMIEL FELDMAN (Switzerland)

Amiel Feldman used a fairly standard Necrodeck. There were only a few differences between his deck and the three Necrodecks in Sunday's final playoffs. Feldman began with four Drain Lifes and four Nevinyrral's Disks in his main deck, rather than three of each used by the others, and he also included one Demonic Consultation in his main deck. Most significantly, he replaced two of the standard "pump" Knights with Lim-Dûl's High Guards. Though more expensive to cast and unable to pump for extra damage, Lim-Dûl's High Guard's regeneration ability allowed them to win any confrontation with other Necrodecks' Knights.

Type II Decklists

JON FINKEL
- 3 Adarkar Wastes
- 4 Arcane Denial
- 1 Balance
- 4 Boomerang
- 3 City of Brass
- 3 Despotic Scepter
- 1 Disenchant
- 1 Feldon's Cane
- 4 Force of Will
- 4 Howling Mine
- 1 Ivory Tower
- 2 Kismet
- 2 Land Cap
- 4 Lim-Dûl's Vault
- 2 Recall
- 2 River Delta
- 4 Stasis
- 4 Underground River
- 1 Zuran Orb
- 11 Island

Sideboard
- 1 Black Vise
- 3 Disenchant
- 2 Feldon's Cane
- 2 Hydroblast
- 2 Mana Short
- 2 Swords to Plowshares
- 3 Wall of Air

ERNO EKEBOM
- 4 Adarkar Wastes
- 1 Aeolipile
- 1 Balance
- 1 Blinking Spirit
- 2 City of Brass
- 2 Control Magic
- 4 Disenchant
- 2 Jeweled Amulet
- 2 Kjeldoran Outpost
- 1 Land Tax
- 4 Mishra's Factory
- 3 Order of Leitbur
- 4 Order of the White Shield
- 3 Power Sink
- 1 Recall
- 4 Savannah Lions
- 1 Serrated Arrows
- 4 Strip Mine
- 3 Swords to Plowshares
- 1 Zuran Orb
- 10 Plains
- 1 Island

Sideboard
- 1 Aeolipile
- 1 Armageddon
- 3 Circle of Protection: Black
- 1 Circle of Protection: Green
- 2 Circle of Protection: Red
- 3 Divine Offering
- 1 Karma
- 1 Serrated Arrows
- 2 Sleight of Mind

ANDREAS NYBORG
- 3 Dragon Whelp
- 1 Earthquake
- 2 Eron the Relentless
- 3 Fellwar Stone
- 2 Fireball
- 4 Fissure
- 4 Lightning Bolt
- 3 Loadstone Bauble
- 2 Orgg
- 4 Pillage
- 3 Shivan Dragon
- 4 Stone Rain
- 4 Strip Mine
- 1 Zuran Orb
- 20 Mountain

Sideboard
- 2 Anarchy
- 2 Curse of Marit Lage
- 1 Earthquake
- 2 Nevinyrral's Disk
- 2 Primitive Justice
- 1 Pyroclasm
- 4 Red Elemental Blast
- 1 Serrated Arrows

AMIEL FELDMAN
- 2 Contagion
- 4 Dark Ritual
- 1 Demonic Consultation
- 4 Drain Life
- 2 Ebon Stronghold
- 4 Hymn to Tourach
- 4 Hypnotic Specter
- 1 Ihsan's Shade
- 1 Ivory Tower
- 2 Lim-Dûl's High Guard
- 3 Mishra's Factory
- 4 Necropotence
- 4 Nevinyrral's Disk
- 2 Order of the Ebon Hand
- 1 Sengir Vampire
- 1 Serrated Arrows
- 4 Strip Mine
- 1 Zuran Orb
- 16 Swamp

Sideboard
- 1 Demonic Consultation
- 4 Dystopia
- 1 Contagion
- 2 Infernal Darkness
- 2 Jester's Cap
- 2 Lodestone Bauble
- 1 Ritual of the Machine
- 1 Serrated Arrows
- 1 Terror

by Beth Moursund

Top 4 Decks from Day 3 (August 16, 1996)

CLASSIC RESTRICTED (TYPE 1.5) COMPETITION

SCOTT JOHNS (United States)

Scott Johns designed his deck with fellow Americans George Baxter and Adam Maysonet. Surprisingly, the deck came close to a Type II legal deck—the only Type 1.5 cards were the dual-lands: Serendib Efreets and Psionic Blasts, along with Consecrate Land in his sideboard. Half of his deck looked like a typical Type II white weenie, featuring ten assorted Knights and four Savannah Lions. After that foundation he added eight red direct-damage spells and two blue ones (Psionic Blast), three Arcane Denials for countering, and Control Magic and Binding Grasp to steal his opponent's creatures. The cards that drew the most notice, however, were in his sideboard: Martyrdoms. Johns added these cards at the last minute, and they proved extremely useful. "With Martyrdom I had a card that would cover three different types of decks. It would work against a deck with a lot of damage; I could redirect damage to one of my creatures and control my opponent's damage. It also works against the Stormdrain; if they tried to drain me for 20 or 30 I could send it over to Savannah Lions or a Knight. It also worked against a heavy creature deck; if my creatures attacked my opponent's creatures, I could send all my damage to an extra creature."

MATTHEW PLACE (United States)

Matthew Place, along with many members of the Pacific Coast Legends team, played a red-green-blue deck designed by Mario Robaina and named "Monkey May I?." The deck featured creatures overpowered in comparison to their casting costs (including four Kird Apes, the "Monkey" of the deck), three types of counterspells (the "May I?"), and direct damage. What really made the deck strong, however, was the combination of Mana Crypts and Jayemdae Tomes. In the early phases of a duel, Mana Crypts helped get large creatures out fast. After that, by using Mana Crypts during upkeep to power the Jayemdae Tomes, the "Monkey May I?" players avoided the Mana Crypt coin-flips and gained a huge card advantage. Any cards otherwise not needed became Stormbind ammunition. Occasionally, a Monkey player would get stuck with no Jayemdae Tome or Mishra's Factory to stuff mana into, and was killed by his or her own Mana Crypt. But in the majority of duels, the Mana Crypts gave the Monkeys the edge they needed to win.

LEON LINDBÄCK (Sweden)

NIKLAS ERIKSSON (Sweden)

Seven of the nine Swedes competing, including **Leon Lindbäck**, **Niklas Eriksson**, and Olle Råde, played almost identical Classic Restricted (Type 1.5) decks. This deck, called "The Fastest Gun in Europe," or simply "The Gun," was designed by Thomas Andersson. Originally conceived as an anti-Necro strategy, the deck centered around a dozen "bolt" spells—Lightning Bolt, Chain Lightning, and Incinerate—and almost an equal number of small, fast creatures: Kird Apes, Savannah Lions, Elvish Archers, and Gorilla Shamans. Already blindingly fast, "The Gun" was made even faster by seven cantrip artifacts (Urza's Baubles and Barbed Sextants). These artifacts made the deck essentially seven cards smaller, so no draws were wasted. "The Gun" turned out to work extremely well not only against Necro-decks, but against every other deck they encountered.

Type 1.5 Quarterfinalists' Decklists

SCOTT JOHNS
- 2 Adarkar Wastes
- 3 Arcane Denial
- 1 Blinding Grasp
- 3 City of Brass
- 1 Control Magic
- 4 Disenchant
- 2 Fireball
- 2 Incinerate
- 4 Lightning Bolt
- 3 Mishra's Factory
- 4 Order of Leitbur
- 4 Order of the White Shield
- 4 Plateau
- 2 Psionic Blast
- 4 Savannah Lions
- 3 Serendib Efreet
- 4 Tundra
- 3 Volcanic Island
- 2 White Knight
- 6 Plains

Sideboard
- 1 Arcane Denial
- 2 Consecrate Land
- 1 Divine Offering
- 3 Martyrdom
- 3 Meekstone
- 3 Pyroblast
- 2 Sleight of Mind

MATTHEW PLACE
- 3 Arcane Denial
- 2 City of Brass
- 2 Deadly Insect
- 3 Erhnam Djinn
- 2 Fireball
- 4 Force of Will
- 2 Incinerate
- 3 Jayemdae Tome
- 4 Kird Ape
- 4 Mana Crypt
- 3 Mana Drain
- 3 Mishra's Factory
- 3 Psionic Blast
- 4 Serendib Efreet
- 2 Stormbind
- 4 Taiga
- 2 Tropical Island
- 4 Volcanic Island
- 2 Forest
- 4 Island

Sideboard
- 2 Blue Elemental Blast
- 4 Control Magic
- 1 Hydroblast
- 1 Nevinyrral's Disk
- 2 Primitive Justice
- 3 Red Elemental Blast
- 2 Tranquility

LEON LINDBÄCK
- 2 Armageddon
- 3 Barbed Sextant
- 4 Chain Lightning
- 4 City of Brass
- 2 Disenchant
- 2 Elvish Archer
- 1 Giant Growth
- 1 Gorilla Shaman
- 4 Incinerate
- 4 Kird Ape
- 4 Lightning Bolt
- 4 Mishra's Factory
- 4 Plateau
- 3 Savannah
- 4 Savannah Lions
- 1 Stormbind
- 4 Strip Mine
- 1 Sylvan Library
- 4 Taiga
- 4 Urza's Bauble

Sideboard
- 2 Anarchy
- 1 Blood Moon
- 1 Circle of Protection: Black
- 2 City in a Bottle
- 2 Conquer
- 2 Disenchant
- 3 Red Elemental Blast
- 1 Shatterstorm
- 1 Plains

NIKLAS ERIKSSON
- 1 Armageddon
- 3 Barbed Sextant
- 4 Chain Lightning
- 4 City of Brass
- 2 Disenchant
- 1 Elvish Archers
- 2 Giant Growth
- 2 Gorilla Shaman
- 4 Incinerate
- 4 Kird Ape
- 4 Lightning Bolt
- 4 Mishra's Factory
- 1 Nevinyrral's Disk
- 4 Plateau
- 4 Savannah
- 3 Savannah Lions
- 1 Stormbind
- 4 Strip Mine
- 4 Taiga
- 4 Urza's Bauble

Sideboard
- 2 Anarchy
- 2 City in a Bottle
- 2 Disenchant
- 1 Karma
- 2 Lhargoyf
- 3 Red Elemental Blast
- 1 Shatterstorm
- 1 Wrath of God
- 1 Plains

by Beth Moursund

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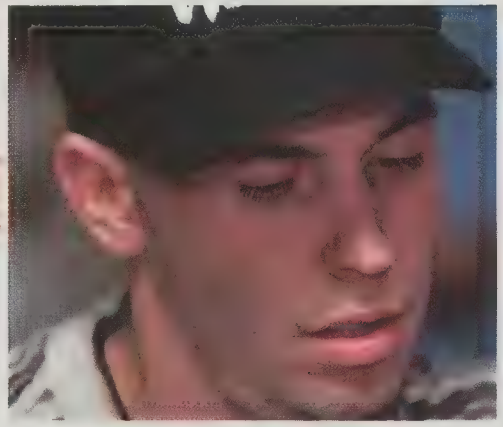
Leon Lindbäck

(Sweden)

"I think that you should have Pro Tour players in the World Championships because it's going to be a truer reflection of the field. After all, this is the World Championships and the world's best player is going to win. I think it's fine to invite Pro Tour players to compete at the Worlds."

Mark Justice



(USA)

"I think they're really one in the same. Right now, all of the best players consider this the pinnacle tournament, so until that changes, or until the Pro Tour expands to such a level where it's just huge, I think the Worlds should remain the top event for the best players."

Marc Hernandez

(France)

"I don't think the World Championships should be part of the Pro Tour because I don't think you need prize money to crown a champion. Money is probably a good way to involve more players, but players who play for their nation don't need to get paid for it. I compete because I like to play **Magic**."

Shawn "Hammer" Regnier

(USA)

"I think the World Championships should definitely be a separate deal. Most of the guys who qualified for Worlds did so at Nationals, so it's totally different."

Eric Radonjic

(Canada)

"If you separate the Pro Tour from the World Championships, I think you might see a drop in participation. It costs a lot of money to fly in and stay some place for a whole week."

The W
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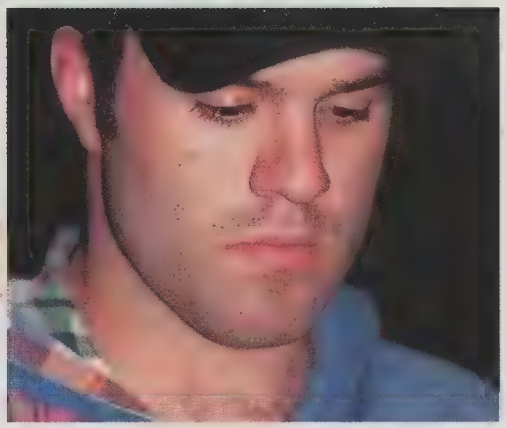
/ Terry Melia

Michael Long



(USA)

"I think it should be separated from the Pro Tour. [1995 World Champion] Alexander Blumke said it best when he told me, 'I don't really see myself as World Champion. I just see myself as somebody who won a big tournament.' And he's right. This is not the World Championships. It's just another big tournament. To be the World Championships, it needs to have a series of events take place beforehand . . . like chess. I think it's still got a ways to go."

Alvaro Marques

(Canada)

"The **Magic** World Championships is for the best players in the world. It's kind of like the Olympics; they say it's amateurs competing, but it's actually professionals. I don't have a problem with it being part of the Pro Tour."

Michael Loconto

(USA)

"I would say that in order to crown the **Magic** World Champion, you'd have to include the Pro Tour. A lot of the really, really strong players are competing on the Tour and if you want to know who's the best player the world, you'd have to include them."

Alexander Blumke

(Switzerland)

"Simply because it is such an important event, I think it should remain separate. I think the World Championships should be considered the crowning of the entire Pro Tour [schedule], so, perhaps, in order to be fully recognized, it has to be part of the Pro Tour."

Scott Johns

(USA)

"I think it's probably a good idea for Wizards to keep the prize money [element]. As a player, I like the cash. I mean, this is what I do for a living, so it encourages me to keep playing."

Besides producing its third individual World Champion in as many years, the 1996 **Magic** World Championships generated—for the second consecutive year—a **Magic** World Team Championship. Four days of intense competition, in which twenty-eight countries battled through six rounds (per day) of Swiss-style pairings, culminated on August 17 with the crowning of the top squad of national players. A total of $22,000 would be awarded to the winning crew. The defending team champion: United States.

Following the first three days of the tournament, in which players competed in a Booster Draft, Standard (Type II), and Classic Restricted (Type 1.5) styles of play, the U.S. foursome held an eight-point lead (90-82) over second-place Switzerland. The U.S. team consisted of '96 National Champion Dennis Bentley, finalist George Baxter, and national semifinalists Matt Place and Mike Long. Long, a 21-year-old history major at James Madison University (VA), was the only returning member from the '95 U.S. squad. Rounding out the top teams following Day 3 were Denmark and Finland (81 points apiece), and Canada and The Czech Republic (both with 80).

by Terry Melia

U.S. Fab Four Takes Top Spot

Day 4 would decide the title, however. The format wasn't easy: Sealed Deck. Each team was given forty-five minutes in which to construct four different decks out of four *Fourth Edition* starters and four *Homelands* boosters. The pressure was on.

"There was a lot of pressure on us because everybody expected us to win," said Baxter. "Teamwork was essential, especially because we needed to construct four different decks that would work well consistently. We had practiced a little bit the night before, so we did okay."

For the U.S., Bentley, 27, from Rochester, NY, played a red-green combo; Baxter, 23, from Dallas, TX, played a white-blue deck; Place, 20, from Kansas City, MO, a red-blue tandem; and Long sported a mostly black deck. At approximately 10:45 A.M., the action began.

In Round 1, the U.S. squared off against the Netherlands. Bentley and Place earned victories, while Baxter and Long ran into trouble. "I played against an unreal deck," said Long. "My opponent had *three* Nightmares. When he dropped his third Nightmare, I just threw my cards down. I couldn't believe it. *Nothing* that we [Team USA] had done prepared me to face a deck like his—three Nightmares, two Hypnotic Specters, two Pestilences, and one Drain Life."

Baxter also felt the squeeze. "All the talk about the foreign teams not being very strong in Sealed Deck. . . well, all that speculation was totally inaccurate. They were very strong. It was rough, really rough—especially for me today."

After splitting with the Netherlands, the U.S. faced Denmark in Round 2. Baxter's woes continued as he, Bentley, and Place all suffered defeats. Only Long was able to score a victory.

UK/Ireland was Team USA's next opponent. The Americans needed a win—badly. Following the first two rounds, the U.S. crew was floundering. Their eight-point lead was now down to two (98–96), as both Switzerland and the fast-approaching Czechs gained considerable ground. The Czechs had earned impressive victories against Mexico (3–1) and Japan (4–0) to seriously close the gap.

Despite the luck of the Irish, Team USA earned a 3–1 victory (good for six points overall) to stay two points ahead of the Czechs, who had now reached the century mark. Denmark, with 97 points, was third, while Switzerland, Canada, and Finland were all tied for fourth with 96 points apiece.

"Ireland was kind of an easy match, but it was just so much fun to play against those guys," said Bentley. "They were already out of the team race, so we were just playing the games really easy. The guy I was playing against had low mana production, so I just beat him up."

Added Long: "Ireland was kind of our easy match, but that was the real turning point for us. George Baxter picked up a really big win."

Round 4 saw the U.S. split with Sweden (2–2) and The Czech Republic edge Austria (2–1–1). The Americans' lead was now down to one point (106–105).

Entering Round 5—after posting four straight team wins against Mexico, Japan, Switzerland, and Austria—The Czech Republic's four-man squad of David Korejtko, Lukas

◀ **We Are The Champions.** Team USA, from left: Matt Place, Dennis Bentley, Mike Long, and George Baxter.

When it came to constructing decks during Day 4, the Czechs didn't mess around.

Kocourek, Ondrej Baudys, and Jakub Slemr had earned the respect of every country. *(See "The Czechs' Decks" on page 36.)* National teams speculated that the Czechs would overtake the Americans soon.

Norway (2–1–1) was next for the Americans; Team Canada (2–0–2) was The Czech Republic's next victim.

"This was a really, really tight match for us," explained Bentley. "I won the first game of my match, but I was down 20–2 in the second. He was playing a red-green deck with X-spells in it. I don't know how I did it, but I was able to win Game 2. I got out enough creatures so that he stopped attacking."

Both Baxter and Place suffered defeats, but Long prevailed. "Dennis really held it up for us at that point," said Long. "Matt lost to a really devastating deck and George played against a tough black deck and wasn't able to pull it out."

The Czechs, meanwhile, were busy picking up five critical team points by going 2–1–1 against Canada. Heading into the sixth and final round, the two front-running teams were deadlocked at 110 points apiece.

"Walking into it, I thought this was gonna be a cakewalk, especially after my experience from last year's Worlds," said Long. "But as the tournament progressed, it was obvious how much the learning curve had improved with both the Asians and Europeans. We were in a real fight."

Round 6 began at approximately 7:30 P.M. The Americans were paired against Team Italy, while the Czechs squared off with Denmark. With $10,000 separating the championship team from runner-up, the tension was thick as fog.

The Americans, behind quick victories by Baxter (who had a bye; Italy had just three team members) and Place, picked up four crucial points. The Czechs were starting to sweat; Denmark had already taken two matches. When Long posted the Americans' third victory in Round 6, the pressure was really on for the Czechs. Incredibly, for the first time all day, they scored just four points (two victories) for the round. The Americans, meanwhile, despite Bentley's hard-fought loss in the evening's final match, had tallied six points—good enough for the win.

So what did this momentous victory mean to members of Team USA?

"It means that, once again, we're the country where all the best **Magic** is being played," said Bentley.

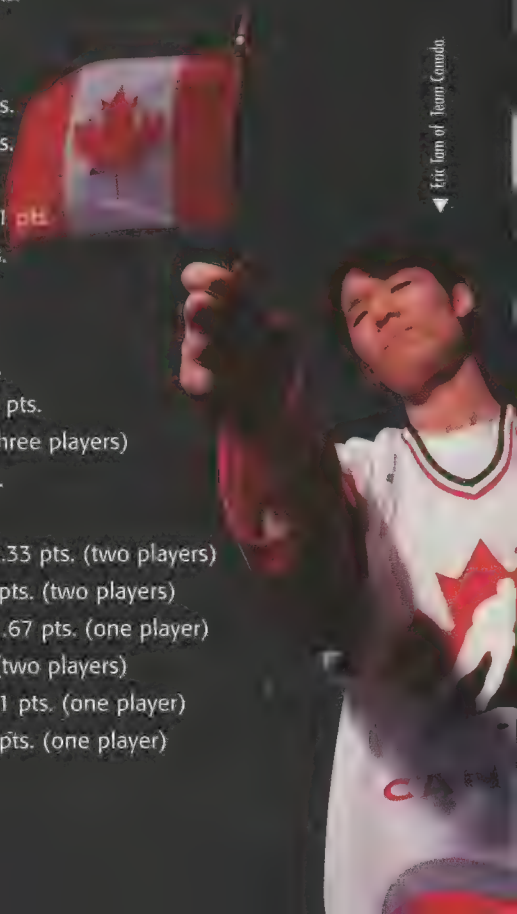
"Overall, it was pretty grueling," said Place. "I felt like I played **Magic** for a hundred hours straight."

In the final team standings, Switzerland, led by '95 World Champion Alexander Blumke, finished third with 112 points, while Denmark took fourth with 110 points. Both teams earned $8,000 for their efforts.

Said Blumke: "The competition was much stronger this year. Actually, I'm surprised, in a positive way, that we did so well as a team. Even though we dropped a little bit [in the standings] today, we posted slightly above-average results. Some of the teams that were following us—like The Czech Republic—did quite well. That's why we dropped a little."

FINAL 1996 TEAM STANDINGS

1. USA—116 pts.
2. The Czech Republic—114 pts.
3. Switzerland—112 pts.
4. Denmark—110 pts.
5. Finland—108 pts.
6. Canada—107 pts.
7. Australia/New Zealand—103 pts.
8. Germany—101 pts.
9. Sweden—99 pts.
10. Japan—98 pts.
11. Hungary—96 pts.
12. Belgium—95 pts.
12. France—95 pts.
14. Netherlands—91 pts.
14. Norway—91 pts.
16. Austria—87 pts.
17. Brazil—86 pts.
18. Mexico—84 pts.
18. UK/Ireland—84 pts.
20. Italy—72 pts. (three players)
20. Iceland—72 pts.
22. Spain—66 pts.
23. Philippines—42.33 pts. (two players)
24. Greece—25.33 pts. (two players)
25. Hong Kong—21.67 pts. (one player)
26. Israel—21 pts. (two players)
27. South Korea—11 pts. (one player)
28. Portugal—9.67 pts. (one player)



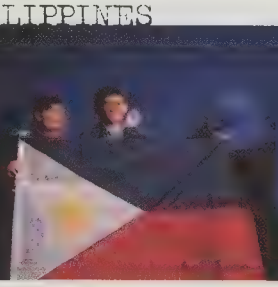
Eric Tam of Team Canada.

Remaining Nations that participated at this year's Magic World Championships.

NETHERLANDS

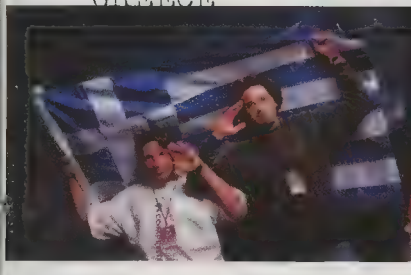
HUNGARY

PHILIPPINES



FRANCE

GREECE



SWEDEN

SOUTH KOREA

UK/IRELAND

BRAZIL

ITALY

MEXICO

AUSTRIA

BELGIUM

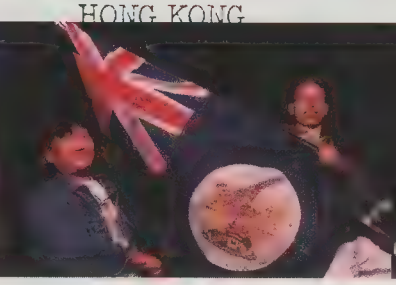
PORTUGAL

SPAIN

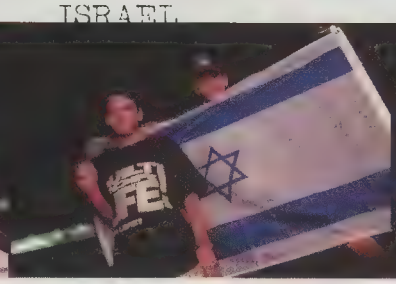
ICELAND

GERMANY

HONG KONG



ISRAEL



NORWAY

The Czechs' Decks

In the Limited (Sealed Deck) Competition, The Czech Republic was the team to beat

by Beth Moursund

When the Czech Republic team opened and sorted out their four sealed decks, they found that they had great creatures in all five colors. They chose an overall strategy of putting three to five good creatures in each deck, along with some anti-creature spells and defense. Each player took the deck best fitting his own playing style.

"David Korejtko, he's really good in control deck," explained Czech teammate Jakub Slemr, when asked about the deck choices. "I'm quite good with white and red. Lukas Kocourek is always good with black, and Ondrej Baudys is good with everything, but the green was the only one left."

The cards in Korejtko's deck fell mainly into three categories: 1) strong defense, 2) creatures with islandwalk, and 3) big artifact creatures. His damage-preventing artifacts—Gaseous Forms, Castle, and Floods, along with two Giant Albatrosses, two Labyrinth Minotaurs, and Time Elemental—gave him the ability to dig in and survive out games for a long period of time. Meanwhile, he could use his Prodigal Sorcerers to stand behind the lines and pick off small creatures or whittle away at his opponent's life. Sea Serpents and Segovian Leviathans (creatures with islandwalk), with help from Phantasmal Terrain or two Jinxes, also become major threats.

Finally, Korejtko got the lion's share of the artifact creatures. Clockworks were well suited to the slow deck, since the long, drawn-out game results in plenty of mana and time to rewind them. Shapeshifter is expensive, but tremendously powerful. Yotian Soldier added to the defense, but could also attack. Ghost Ship, Flight, and Jump formed a small fourth category, providing an air force that could bypass the powerful creature morass, as well as providing additional defense against creatures immune to Flood.

Slemr's red-white deck was quite the opposite of Korejtko's, being almost entirely offense. The deck centered around two big creatures with flying (Serra Angel and Shivan Dragon), one big ground-pounder (the Ottoman Golem), and Disintegrate. Accompanying these heavy hitters were a collection of high-cost creatures, including two with direct-damage abilities (Anaba Shaman and Brothers of Fire), and a few smaller ones. Giant Strength and two Holy Strengths turned small creatures into big ones, while Healing Salve and two Death Wards helped keep his creatures alive and attacking. An-Zerrin Ruins could take one of his opponent's attackers out of the action; Detonate could explode his opponent's artifact creature or other annoying artifact; and Disenchant was worth its weight in gold against both artifacts and enchantments, especially Circle of Protections.

Kocourek's deck featured a massive air force: six black creatures with flying, ranging in size from Vampire Bats up through Sengir Vampire. With Howl from Beyond, Unholy Strength, and Feast of the Unicorn to add to their power, these creatures by themselves could defeat many decks. By adding direct damage from Drain Life, Dry Spell, and Pestilence, and creature destruction using Torture and Broken Visage, the deck became frighteningly effective. But that's not all. The deck also had fairly good defense in the form of Drudge Skeletons and Cemetery Gates, a Simulacrum to fend off a game-ending direct-damage spell, and two Animate Deads to either recycle his own creatures or steal the best of his opponent's dead. If all that wasn't enough, Cosmic Horror (7/7, first strike) added a final touch to win any creature standoff.

The final deck, played by Baudys, began with a core of massive green creatures—eight big bruisers, ranging in power from 3 to 6, costing four or more mana apiece to summon. Llanowar Elves, two Scryb Sprites, and two Pradesh Gypsies gave Baudys a few faster creatures; Giant Growth, Shrink, and Carapace also helped defend against opponent's attacks until he had enough land in play to summon the big nasties. With Scryb Sprites as his only creatures with flying, the deck would have been almost defenseless against an air attack, but two Grapeshot Catapults and Hurricane helped to guard the skies, and Primal Clay could add another slightly bigger flier to the crew. Pradesh Gypsies also took the sting out of larger attacking fliers, or Venom could turn a Scryb Sprite into a build-your-own Cockatrice. Wooden Sphere and Stream of Life gave additional staying power, and Coral Helm could make the small fliers a force to fear or make a huge ground creature even bigger.

DCI Player Rankings Report

TOP 200 (MINIMUM OF 10 MATCHES PLAYED)

LIMITED (SEALED DECK) PLAY • RANKINGS AS OF JULY 8, 1996

rank*	player*	city,state*	rating*
1	Adam Maysonet	Sunrise, FL	1846
2	Steven O'Mahoney-Schwartz	Brooklyn, NY	1837
3	Tom Guevin	Nashua, NH	1806
4	Adam Green	Nashua, NH	1785
5	Brad Swan	Landenberg, PA	1783
6	Jeff Sternal	Chicago, IL	1780
7	Paul McCabe	Toronto, Canada	1775
8	Mark Justice	West Valley City, UT	1774
9	Ronny Serro	Streamwood, IL	1766
10	Matthew Vienneau	–	1765
11	Jason Zila	Huntington Beach, CA	1764
12	Jon Finkel	Fanwood, NJ	1757
12	Collin Hayes	Plantation, FL	1757
14	Shawn "Hammer" Regnier	Manchester, NH	1754
15	Gabriel Alonso	Mount Laurel, NJ	1753
16	Dan Hörning	Stockholm, Sweden	1752
17	Preston Poulter	Irvine, CA	1749
18	Eric Kirkman	Denver, CO	1746
18	Scott Johns	Northridge, CA	1746
20	Steve Nabrotzky	Parry Sound, Canada	1744
21	Cory Jensen	Omaha, NE	1742
22	Stephane Bolduc	Verdun, Candada	1737
22	Stuart Darragh	Bloomington, IL	1737
24	Scott M. Klabacha	Chicago, IL	1736
24	Brad Shugg	Brooklyn, MI	1736
26	Robert Melville	Chippewa Falls, WI	1734
27	Brian Chew	Mountain View, CA	1733
28	Aaron Terry	Plantation, FL	1729
29	MacKenzie Patterson Jr.	Carmel, CA	1728
30	Frank T. Gilson	Anaheim, CA	1727
31	Jim Hustad	Madison, WI	1726
32	Dominic K. Crapuchettes	Annapolis, MD	1724
32	John Immordino	Carmichael, CA	1724
34	Mike Dove	Rolla, MO	1722
34	Justin Schroeder	Fort Collins, CO	1722
36	Henry Johnson	San Luis Obispo, CA	1720
37	Dave Lyon	West Des Moines, IA	1719
38	Sean Fleischman	Bronx, NY	1718
38	Bryce Currence	Palos Verdes Estates, CA	1718
38	Justin Schneider	Lutherville, MD	1718
41	Chris Rainey	San Diego, CA	1717
42	Vaughn Sandor	Woodbridge, NJ	1716
42	Vincent Scherrer	Fort Collins, CO	1716
44	Tom Swan	Landenberg, PA	1715
45	Terry Borer	North York, Canada	1714
46	Chris Cade	San Jose, CA	1713
47	Steven Parks	East Lansing, MI	1711
48	Brian Weissman	Campbell, CA	1709
48	Christopher Peters	Taylorville, IL	1709
50	Patrick Albro	Rochester, NY	1707
50	Heath Jennings	Thousand Oaks, CA	1707
50	Jan Maurten	–	1707
53	Steve Jones	New York, NY	1705
53	Braydon Simms	Sunrise, FL	1705
55	Gere Camper	Wichita, KS	1703
56	Matt Elias	Lansdale, PA	1702
56	Robert Dougherty	Cambridge, MA	1702
56	Michael Beal	Auburn, WA	1702
59	Darwin Kastle (Mess)	Boston, MA	1701
59	Eric Wenokor	Brooklyn, NY	1701
61	John Yoo	Irvine, CA	1700
62	Richard Davis	Orem, UT	1699
63	George Baxter	Dallas, TX	1698
64	Robert Koschak	Minneapolis, MN	1697
64	Patrick Hancir	Champaign, IL	1697
66	Rick Latham	Springfield, MO	1696
66	Jennifer Hemphill	Champaign, IL	1696
66	Keith Vanhoutan	Wichita, KS	1696
69	Chad Hastaba	Middle Village, NY	1695
69	Talieom Sutton	Chicago, IL	1695
71	Paul Pantera	Mountain View, CA	1694
71	Jack Lewis Stanton	Idaho Falls, ID	1694
71	Scott Reinfield	Boynton Beach, FL	1694
71	Jon Saso	Cupertino, CA	1694
71	Jeff Wood	Mountain View, CA	1694
76	Mark Chalice	Claremont, CA	1693
76	Adam Clarke	Londonderry, NH	1693
78	Dana Travis Rossi	Monson, MA	1692
78	Gabriele Pisicchio	Rome, Italy	1692
80	MacKenzie Patterson III	Carmel, CA	1691
80	Nathan Wildgrube	New York, NY	1691
80	Neil Guthrie	Stockholm, Sweden	1691
83	Paul Rednour	Derby, KS	1690
84	Chris Kelley	Waterford, MI	1689
85	Paul J. Paella	Tonawanda, NY	1688
85	Max Szlagor	Schaumberg, IL	1688
85	Javier Garavito	Kent, WA	1688
85	Bill Bathurst	Seattle, WA	1688
89	Alex Kallend	Chicago, IL	1687
89	Ralph H. Anderson	New York, NY	1687
89	Paul Wilkens	Tallahassee, FL	1687
89	Augustin Chan	–	1687
89	Brendon Delaney	Seattle, WA	1687
94	Andrew Polis	Chicago, IL	1686
94	Michael Aykens	–	1686
96	Mark Venhaus	Hawthorne, CA	1685
96	Joshua Bradford	Tallahassee, FL	1685
96	Steven Gruenwald	Dixon, IL	1685
96	Chris Czuba	Oak Brook, IL	1685
100	Leon Lindbäck	Stockholm, Sweden	1684
100	Jeff Olson	London, England	1684
102	Matt Hyra	Seattle, WA	1683
102	Michael Loconto	Grafton, MA	1683
102	Craig Mackey	Kirkland, WA	1683
102	Benjamin Rioux-Masse	An Jou, Canada	1683
106	James Lemire	Southboro, MA	1682
107	Travis Thomas	Coral Springs, FL	1681
107	David Berg	Rolla, MO	1681
107	Randy Jarvis	North York, New York	1681
110	Eric Strome	Simi Valley, CA	1680
110	Jonathan Meyer	Brea, CA	1680
110	Derek Rank	Oakton, VA	1680
110	Andrea Redi	Cilavena (PV), Italy	1680
110	Mike Croft	–	1680
110	Neil Calderone	Chicago, IL	1680
116	Bryan McKinty	Sudbury, Canada	1678
116	Alvaro Marques	London, Canada	1678
116	Greg Siden	Jim Falls, WI	1678
119	Robert Deloura	Seattle, WA	1677
119	Sam Beavers	Santa Barbara, CA	1677
119	Mike Platte	Ada, MI	1677
119	Eric Tam	Toronto, Canada	1677
119	Chris McMahon	Freemont, NE	1677
119	Brian Odell	–	1677
119	Isaac Maynard	Ajax, Canada	1677
126	Dennis Lee Nichols	Omaha, NE	1676
126	Julia Berggren	San Diego, CA	1676
126	Bruce Swiney	Tacoma, WA	1676
126	Nicolas Sikuganki	Warrenville, IL	1676
126	John S. Kenny	Mentor, OH	1676
131	Charles Mross	Morgan Hill, CA	1675
131	William Kincaid	Topeka, KS	1675
131	Jesse Zinn	–	1675
134	Sean Conway	Abington, MA	1674
134	Michael Rohr	Urbana, IL	1674
136	Jeffrey Pysher	Newark, DE	1673
136	Elliott Campbell	Lincoln, NE	1673
138	Dylan Selvig	P.g., CA	1672
138	Johan Lundström	–	1672
138	Peter Burzunski	Redmond, WA	1672
141	Michael Kopp	Charleston, IL	1671
141	David Johnson	Brooklyn Center, MN	1671
141	John Arendt	Boulder, CO	1671
144	David Paris	San Jose, CA	1670
145	Jeremy Genrich	Omaha, NE	1669
145	Daniel O'Mahoney-Schwartz	Brooklyn, NY	1669
145	Maxwell Suver	Seattle, WA	1669
148	Richard Vlastnik	Peru, IL	1668
148	Matthew Perez	Redmond, WA	1668
148	Ernest Alexander	Isla Vista, CA	1668
151	Frederik Foure	Devon, PA	1667
151	Darren Mills	Ulysses, KS	1667
151	Antonio Lemos	La Jolla, CA	1667
154	Chris Suver	Seattle, WA	1666
154	Ariel Sas	Simi Valley, CA	1666
154	Alexander Zane	Tujunga, CA	1666
154	Feming Chan	Cranbury, NJ	1666
154	Richard C. Johnson	Bothell, WA	1666
159	Kevin Stelzer	Des Moines, IA	1665
159	Brian Smith	Sunnyvale, CA	1665
159	Ben Bleiweiss	New Orleans, LA	1665
159	Dion Moe	Portland, OR	1665
159	Damon Bryson	Macon, GA	1665
164	Solomon Malka	Atlanta, GA	1664
165	Greg Gruenwald	Arlington Heights, IL	1663
166	Matthew Place	Kansas City, MO	1662
166	Johan Disenborg	Tyresö, Sweden	1662
166	Steven Lee	Fremont, NE	1662
169	Corey Lay	Downey, CA	1661
169	Jason Bryan	Glen Ellyn, IL	1661
171	James McGovern	Middle Village, NY	1660
171	Jeremiah Tollman	Denver, CO	1660
171	Craig Skane	Spring Lake, MI	1660
174	Clint Couse	St. Louis, MO	1659
174	David Barry	St. Clair Shores, MI	1659
174	Mike Hamler	Glen Ellyn, IL	1659
174	Allan Shuldiner	Torrance, CA	1659
174	Bertrand Lestrée	Pantin, France	1659
179	Matt Seelke	Rolla, MO	1658
179	Jim Spiker	Maple Valley, WA	1658
181	Remy Evard	Watertown, MA	1657
181	Josh Maxman	Reseda, CA	1657
181	Richard Stefanich	Muskegon, MI	1657
184	Rob Watkins	Sunnyvale, CA	1656
184	Robert Edward Liszka	Long Grove, IL	1656
184	Shawn Davies	Ottawa, Canada	1656
187	Greg Foley	Inglewood, CO	1655
188	Truc Bui	Los Angeles, CA	1654
188	Anne Sidell	Simi Valley, CA	1654
188	Kevin Reed	Manchester, NH	1654
188	Jeanna Bloom	Hanover Park, IL	1654
192	Dennis Lee	Charlotte, NC	1653
192	Gordon Smith	Redmond, WA	1653
192	Jeff Donais	–	1653
195	Dan Lofgren	Milpitas, CA	1652
195	Kurt Burgner	Torrance, CA	1652
195	Joey Alpern	North Miami Beach, FL	1652
195	Jeff Mintz	San Luis Obispo, CA	1652
199	Robert McCann	Kent, WA	1651
200	Keith A. Prewett	Oak Harbor, WA	1650

MOST UNUSUAL TYPE II DECK

The Czech Republic's David Korejtko Takes Top Billing

w/ Bain Mourning

Most decks at the 1996 **Magic** World Championships Standard (Type II) competition fell into a few predictable categories. More than a third were "Necrodecks", then came the "Erhnams" ("Erhnaged-don," "Erhnam and Burn 'em," and red-white-green decks combining the two), weenie decks, permission, land destruction, burn decks, Millstone, and the newly famous "Turbo-Stasis." All of these we ignored; we were searching for the most unusual, most outlandish deck in the tournament. And we found it!

Special mention goes to Canadian Gary Krakower's mono-green, 34-creature horde, but the overall winner was David Korejtko of The Czech Republic team, for his "X Deck."

As Korejtko began dueling, his X Deck looked and played like an ultra-defensive permission deck.

Most of the defense came in the form of walls. Wall of Air and Thunder Wall each cost just three mana and can block creatures with flying. Wall of Air can stop anything up to Serra Angel or Sengir Vampire, and can even destroy 2/1 "pump-knights," Savannah Lions, and Elvish Archers on which Necro and weenie decks relied so heavily. Thunder Wall is weak by itself, but powered by one blue mana it too can kill the weenies; and with enough mana behind it, it can take out anything the opponent dares to attack with. Next comes Wall of Wonder, costing just four mana. This one doesn't have flying, but it too can destroy 1-toughness attackers, and it threatened Korejtko's opponents with the possibility of smacking them for 5 damage should they ever let down their defenses.

If Korejtko could get one or two of these creature-destruction walls into play, it was usually enough to keep his opponents from attacking at all until they had built up a sizable army or found a way to remove the walls. Korejtko used Counterspells, Power Sinks, and Force of Wills to help keep the walls in play, and to say "no" to any non-creature threats, such as big Fireballs or Armageddon, that his opponents produced.

Three Icy Manipulators provided another form of defense. If his opponents were short on mana, Korejtko could use his Icy Manipulators to tap their land during upkeep, thereby restricting their mana supply. If his opponents could get enough creatures into play to attack past the walls, an Icy Manipulator helped hold off the attack by tapping creatures before they could attack. Icy Manipulators are also invaluable against Winter Orb and Black Vise, often the bane of permission decks; tapping the artifacts each turn stopped them from working.

All of this defense would usually drag out each game. Eventually Korejtko would get sufficient land in play and draw one of his key cards. He had several different ways to win with this deck; his strategy depended partly on what his opponent played, but largely on which cards come up first.

The first key card is Browse. If Korejtko drew Browse and had enough land to spend four mana without "letting down the shields" by leaving too little mana available for Counterspells, he would cast it and begin churning through the library at the end of his opponents' turns. Soon his hand was full of enough Counterspells to deal with anything his opponents tried to cast. Sometimes while using Browse, Korejtko would pick up Soldevi Digger; once he was confident of his ability to protect it with Counterspells, he'd cast it. Using a final Browse or two, he would empty the library, and the loop began. Each turn, Korejtko could use a card, then activate Soldevi Digger to put it back onto the empty library, ready to draw again next turn. If his opponents would cast a spell, Korejtko countered it, then used Soldevi Digger to put the counter back into his library. Otherwise, he could recycle a Strip Mine or a Jester's Cap to destroy his opponents' lands or library until they were completely helpless and ran out of cards.

What totally blew our minds was Korejtko's other key card and route of winning: Homarid Spawning Bed. We thought we'd never see this card in a serious tournament deck; but in Torejtko's X Deck, it worked. Picture a long, drawn-out game, with lots of land and a number of walls in play. Now Korejtko puts down a Homarid Spawning Bed. At the end of his opponent's turn, it's bedtime! Each Wall of Air or Thunder Wall not needed for defense becomes three 1/1 Camarids, ready and raring to attack. Surprise! The passive, defensive wall deck has suddenly become an aggressive blue weenie deck; hordes of Camarids swarm past his opponent's defenses and bring the game to an unexpectedly quick end.

This off-the-wall deck, though it didn't finish at the top, earned Korejtko a very respectable 41st place during Thursday's Type II competition. So the next time a friend jokingly suggests you play an all-wall deck in a tournament, just smile and say, "I just might do that."

T2

MOST UNUSUAL DECK

KOREJTKO'S DECK

4	Boomerang
4	Browse
2	Control Magic
4	Counterspell
3	Force of Will
2	Homarid Spawning Bed
3	Icy Manipulator
	Ivory Tower
	Jester's Cap
	Power Sink
	Recall
2	Soldevi Digger
4	Strip Mine
4	Svyelunite Temple
2	Thunder Wall
4	Wall of Air
2	Wall of Wonder
1	Zuran Orb
20	Island

SIDEBOARD

3	Blue Elemental Blast
	Deflection
	[illegible]
	Force of Will
	Hydroblast
	Magical Hack
	Unsummon
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'Yåh, It's Cool'

Sweden's Olle Räde Earns Pro Tour 'Player of the Year' Award

by Terry Melia

Each year, the **Magic** Pro Tour schedule consists of a series of events that culminates with the much-anticipated World Championships. As a way to determine the most proficient Player of the Year, Wizards of the Coast officials have devised a point-scoring system which allows the players to chart their progress throughout the year. At the close of the World Championships, all Player of the Year points for the past season are then added up and a Pro Tour Player of the Year is crowned. The winner's prize package includes round-trip airfare and hotel accommodations to each of the following year's Pro Tour stops.

Olle Räde, a 17-year-old student from Göteborg, Sweden, earned the 1995-96 Pro Tour "Player of the Year" award based on his outstanding performances at just two of the four stops on this year's schedule. Räde, who didn't compete at Pro Tour–New York and who failed to qualify for Pro Tour–Long Beach, surprised everyone by taking first place at Pro Tour–Columbus's *Ice Age/Alliances* constructed-deck tournament in Columbus, OH. Besides winning $22,000, he picked up 30 Pro Tour points by virtue of his victory.

Heading into this year's **Magic** World Championships, Räde trailed Pro Tour–Long Beach Champion Shawn "Hammer" Regnier of Manchester, NH, 41–30, in the Pro Tour's individual points race. Regnier had earned additional points by finishing as a quarterfinalist at Pro Tour–New York (10 points) and placing 33rd at Pro Tour–Columbus (1 point). Räde also trailed Pro Tour–New York Champion Michael Loconto of Grafton, MA, who entered with 33 Pro Tour points to his credit, as well as Bronx, NY, native Sean Fleischman, Räde's championship-round opponent at Pro Tour–Columbus, who came in with 31 points.

When the dust had settled following this year's World Championships, Räde—despite getting bumped off by Mark Justice in the semifinals—had outlasted and outscored the best of the best. Besides earning $9,000 at this year's Worlds, he picked up 20 more Pro Tour points by making it to the semifinals, which was enough to surpass Regnier, who finished 75th overall at Worlds. Räde's prize as Pro Tour Player of the Year includes round-trip airfare and hotel accommodations to all five stops on the 1996-97 Pro Tour circuit: Atlanta (Sept.); Dallas (Nov.); Long Beach, CA (Feb.); Paris, France (April); and New York City (June).

"Yeah, it's cool to win Pro Tour Player of the Year," said the soft-spoken Swede. "I really didn't care that I lost in the semifinals [to Justice].

"There were a lot of tough players here [at Worlds], much tougher than the players at Columbus. I was actually rather surprised by Hungary and The Czech Republic. And Denmark wasn't bad either."

Asked what he plans to do with his combined prize winnings ($31,000), Räde just shrugged his shoulders. "I haven't really decided. I still live at home, so maybe I'll go out and buy an apartment or something—when I'm allowed to, that is." ✉

Pro Tour Point-Scoring System:

- First-place finishers earn 30 pts.
- Second-place finishers earn 25 pts.
- Top 3–4 finishers earn 20 pts.
- Top 5–8 finishers earn 10 pts.
- Top 9–16 finishers earn 4 pts.
- Top 17–32 finishers earn 2 pts.
- Top 33–64 finishers earn 1 pt.

This past year's Pro Tour schedule included: New York City (February); Long Beach, CA (May); Columbus, OH (July); and the 1996 **Magic** World Championships in Seattle (August). A total of 184 players earned points during the inaugural Pro Tour season.

Top 30 Players

1.	50 points	Olle Räde (Sweden)
2.	41 points	Shawn "Hammer" Regnier (USA)
3.	37 points	Mark Justice (USA)
4.	34 points	Michael Loconto (USA)
5.	31 points	Sean Fleischman (USA)
6.	31 points	Preston Poulter (USA)
7.	30 points	Tom Chanpheng (Australia)
8.	30 points	Scott Johns (USA)
9.	27 points	Tom Guevin (USA)
10.	26 points	Bertrand Lestrée (France)
11.	25 points	Eric Tam (Canada)
12.	24 points	Leon Lindbäck (Sweden)
13.	23 points	Henry Stern (USA)
14.	22 points	Darwin Kastle (USA)
15.	22 points	Alvaro Marques (Canada)
16.	22 points	Peter Radonjic (Canada)
17.	21 points	Mark Venhaus (USA)
18.	15 points	George Baxter (USA)
19.	14 points	Matthew Place (USA)
20.	12 points	John Immordino (USA)
21.	11 points	Javier Garavito (USA)
22.	11 points	Vaughn Sandor (USA)
23.	11 points	Brian Weissman (USA)
24.	10 points	Chris Bishop (USA)
25.	10 points	Tommi Hovi (Finland)
26.	10 points	David Humpherys (USA)
27.	10 points	Jeff Wood (USA)
28.	9 points	Dennis Bentley (USA)
29.	8 points	Michael Long (USA)
30.	7 points	Andrea Redi (Italy)

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McGOUGH•SOUNDS•OFF

rookie mistakes

by Scott McGough

You forget to attack with all your creatures, or you don't have enough defensive spells for your key permanents, or you tap the wrong land with your Icy Manipulator and your opponent capitalizes. Michael Loconto himself correctly called that last blunder a "major, major rookie mistake" when he made it during the finals of Pro Tour—New York back in February. Rookie mistakes are the kind you made during your first year of play, while you were still learning all the ins and outs of **Magic**. When rookies are still learning the rules, mastering the basics, and establishing their rhythm of play, it's much easier for their concentration to lapse during a tight game.

With Wizards of the Coast's inaugural Pro Tour season officially concluded, we can look back on our first competitive field as rookies. The Pro Tour is, after all, still in its infancy stages. Competitive titles bestow justifiable prestige, but competitive titles with cash purses do the same with the delightful benefit of free money. As individuals and teams, Pro Tour players have helped define a new and higher level of competition. As a whole, however, they are making rookie mistakes.

A foolish consistency lies among Pro Tour-level players, where clusters of recognizable deck types dominate the field. You know the names: "Necro," "Turbo/Stasis," "Erhnam and Burn 'Em." Half of the semifinalists, finalists, and champions at the Great Lakes and Northwest Regionals were playing Necrodecks; 3 out of the top 8 finishers in the 1996 World Championship played Necrodecks; tournament threads on the Internet usually center around tweaking shared deck designs. Wizards of the Coast game designer Richard Garfield drew a line between two types of players, separating innovators (who break out of established patterns with new ideas) from honers (who take the innovators' raw ideas and refine them into tournament readiness).

Perhaps the high percentage of honers in the 1995-96 season is due to our natural predatory and herding instincts: everyone else is having so much success with this particular playing method, I bet it would work for me, too. There is something hollow, however, about successfully using someone else's tools; especially in **Magic**, where so many options are available.

The deck themes I listed above—and the many I didn't—all have undeniably sound designs, and have proven themselves at all levels of play. The very nature of the Pro Tour is one of competition for gain, evidenced by the most frequent responses to *The Duelist Sideboard*'s player survey question: "What is the best thing about the Pro Tour?" (Answer: "competition," followed closely by "money.") As **Magic** grows and its community of players becomes larger, the stakes associated with purses, titles, and rankings will continue to rise. Competition is at an all-time (and ever-increasing) high, and so are the ingenuity, energy, and adaptability that all competition demands.

There is no reason *not* to use a deck that you know you can play with and win. Sure, it's a lot less fun to co-opt a trend than it is to have a brilliant idea for a new deck design, but Pro Tour–Long Beach Champion Shawn "Hammer" Regnier spoke for all of his fellows, and buried any problems I might have with the predatory herd instinct

when he said, "A fun deck is one that wins." Amen to that.

Except, for instance:

• All of the Pro Tour events' top prize money have been won by unique decks. Even if you discount Hammer's Booster-Draft deck on technical grounds, Loconto's hyper-dedicated Millstone, and Olle Råde's collection of Giant and Woolly Spiders at Pro Tour—Columbus, were undeniably successful and undeniably their own.

• Dennis Bentley won the U.S. Nationals with a Necrodeck, but it was a variation that used fewer "pump" Knights and completely ignored Drain Life and Nevinrryal's Disk, which had just been named as integral to a successful Necro-strategy by both players and Rob Hahn of *The Duelist*. Bentley never even cast Necropotence itself during the final match.

• Mark Justice, universally regarded as one of the best players and perhaps the best deck designer currently in the game, tried by his own account to come up with a reliable Necro-beater for the '96 U.S. Nationals. After weeks of practice and playtesting, he was forced to conclude that if you can't beat 'em, join 'em, and went with Necro himself. He was eliminated from the Nationals after reaching the Top 16.

• At the U.S. Nationals, 4 top players took an almost forgotten concept (Stasis), revitalized it with some high octane *Alliances*, and took 3 semifinalist slots with it. Their "Turbo/Statis" is now a staple on the Pro-Tour.

• Australia's Tom Chenphang decisively won the 1996 World Championships using a lighting-fast, white-weenie deck. White weenies are just as familiar on the tournament circuit as Necrodecks and Erhnageddon, but the weenie theme is flexible enough to accommodate a huge number of personal interpretations. The runner-up? Mark Justice's Necrodeck.

The Pro Tour's predatory herd that used Necrodecks and Erhnageddon did win high-level matches and money; they did not, as a rule, win tournaments. The rookie mistake these players make is perhaps the most basic of all: underestimating one's own abilities. Anyone who qualifies for a Pro Tour event (or similarly high-level tournament) is good enough to innovate a deck design. Any player who makes a point of keeping abreast of the latest expansions and how they affect game play, knows enough about them to marshall them into an efficient deck. As impractical as it may seem to be calling for more innovation and less reliance on the established in an environment that does not allow for gentle upward learning curves, it's not just a theoretical issue. Solid and tested deck designs help good players win, but they do not help them design, and designing is one of the most important skills a **Magic** player must possess. Playing and deck design necessarily interact, and the best players hone one on the other.

I have high hopes for the next Pro Tour season, that we will see less clustering and more original deck designs. The introduction of *Alliances* and *Mirage* will give players ample opportunity to reboot the tournament-level playing field, which is good for the game, good for spectators, and good for the players themselves. After all, the real difference between a traditional rookie mistake as we all know it, and a Pro Tour rookie mistake that I have defined here (proven, again, by Michael Loconto) is that you can make a traditional rookie mistake and still win the tournament.

Photos by Jim Sulley

Whispers from the Stromgald Spy

By Lisa Stevens

Welcome to this insider's perspective on what's happening behind the scenes on the **Magic** Pro Tour circuit. I will be your Stromgald Spy, so to speak.

The name stems from an embarrassing incident that occurred during the Pro Tour–Columbus event in the semi-final match between Sean Fleischman and Alvaro Marques. I was filling in for Henry Stern on the floor, feeding information back to color commentators Mark Rosewater and Mark Justice. Rosewater was wondering if Fleischman had anything in his hand to take care of Marques' hand. I glanced and saw that Fleischman had Counterspell and Incinerate. Normally, I would have taken precautions to not let the players hear me, but, for some reason—perhaps lack of sleep—I vocalized this fact rather loudly, immediately realizing that I had screwed up.

Fleischman looked crestfallen and Marques triumphant. Justice immediately dubbed me the "Stromgald Spy," since I was telling Marques what was in Fleischman's hand. Being a true champion, however, Fleischman put the pair of cards face down on the table and proceeded to play, eventually beating Marques in that same game and moving on to the finals.

This year's **Magic** World Championships was the best **Magic** event I've ever attended. The camaraderie among the players was unreal. Sure, the competition was intense, but it was very sportsmanlike. Here are some of the tidbits I gleaned from the players:

▲ The Pacific Coast Legends (Team PCL) will undergo some changes. PCL co-founder Henry Stern has retired from the **Magic** scene to work for Wizards of the Coast in the Research & Development department. He will be replaced by Scott Johns. Scott Burke has also left the team. Key candidates to fill vacancies are Matthew Place, Brian Weissman, Jason Zila, George Baxter, and Eric Tam.

▲ Speaking of retirements, the rumor mill has it that Bertrand Lestrée of France is considering folding his cards and disappearing from the **Magic** Pro Tour after less-than-satisfying results at the last three major events. Dallas, Texas player George Baxter is also thinking about retiring at the end of the next season to pursue law school.

▲ Sean Fleischman has finally decided to retire his famous feathered hat, which he wore for luck during tournaments. He accidentally left it at home for the third Pro Tour stop and proceeded to finish in second place. When he decided to wear it at the Worlds this year, he suffered a streak of bad luck. The hat, now officially retired, will end up in a display case at WotC's Tournament Center.

▲ Another relic acquired from the World Championships was Mark Justice's magic 8-ball. Justice would consult the 8-ball throughout the tournament whenever he was faced with a key decision. Unfortunately, he didn't listen to the 8-ball when it told him it would be bad news to double consult for the two Dark Rituals in Game 2 of the finals.

▲ The following deck names appeared during the Classic Restricted (Type 1.5) day at the Worlds:

• "Star-Spangled Slaughter"—this deck excelled with its red, white, and blue mix of weenie creatures, direct damage, and permission.

• "The Gun"—this deck, played by the Swedes, relied on getting lots of small creatures out, combined with a lot of bolt action and Stormbind.

• "Storm Drain"—relying on an infinite loop of Storm Cauldron and Fastbond, this deck would kill the opponent by casting a huge Drain Life.

• "X-Files"—this deck was played by "Hammer" and focused on getting out big creatures with flying (UFOs) and protecting them with lots of permission.

• "Monkey-May-I?"—this PCL creation put out a creature such as an Erhnam Djinn or Serendib Efreet, and then protected it with permission and bolts. One of the keys was getting what Mark Justice dubbed as his "own personal Howling Mine." This was set up by casting Mana Crypt and then, during your upkeep, using the mana from the Crypt to activate a Jayemdae Tome—thus giving you an extra card each turn.

▲ Quote of the Week: Shawn "Hammer" Regnier on losing to another Necrodeck, "We are here to find the best players in the world, right? Huh—Hymn, Strip, Hymn, Strip, Hymn, Strip. Geez."

▲ There are a number of unofficial **Magic** player organizations attempting to get off the ground. One that could result from the Worlds has Mike Long, Marc Hernandez, Preston Poulter, Mark Justice, Shawn "Hammer" Regnier, and Neil Guthrie as its key principals. The purpose of this group is to provide a voice for tournament players to Wizards of the Coast on issues that affect the tournament scene.

Next issue, I'll bring you the scoop from Atlanta, the site of the first stop on WotC's 1996-97 **Magic** Pro Tour schedule.

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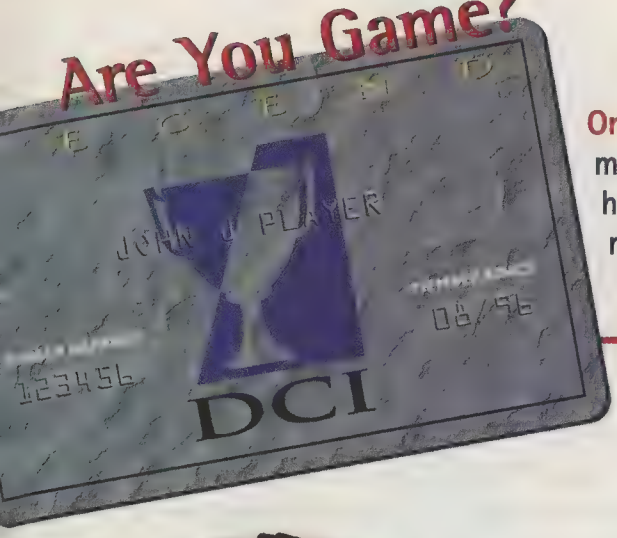

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YOUNG GUNS

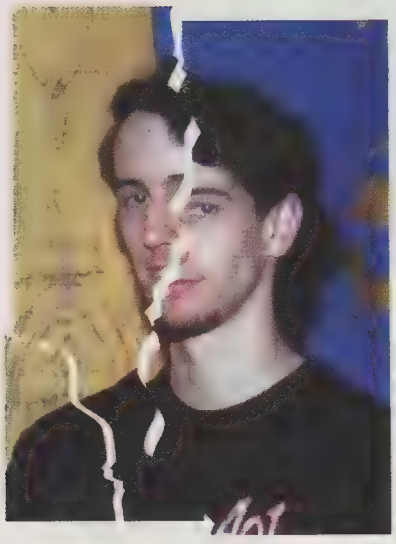
Never Underestimate a Junior's Playing Ability

By Daniel and Steven O'Mahoney-Schwartz

Since its release three years ago, **Magic: The Gathering** has become a popular card game, especially among people between the ages of eight and eighteen. High school and junior high students can often be found playing **Magic** during their lunch periods, in the hallways, and after school. Some schools even have special clubs devoted to the game.

But ever since Wizards of the Coast launched its first-ever **Magic: The Gathering** Pro Tour circuit earlier this year, many people view the game differently. All of a sudden **Magic** has earned respectability as a true test of the intellect, as well as being just a wonderful pastime. With so many bright young students playing the game throughout the world, it's no wonder many of them have emerged as serious **Magic** players in the competitive arena.

Terry Borer and Paul McCabe are two terrific battlers out of Canada. ▼



Wherever a **Magic** community exists, one can usually find a large concentration of players in their teens, some even younger. Why is it then, with so many up-and-comers (eighteen and younger) competing alongside their elder comrades, that one hears so little about the junior-level player? While most people remember the long, drawn-out battle between Michael Loconto and Bertrand Lestrée in the championship match of the Master division at the Pro Tour—New York, there's been little talk of Graham Tatomer's hard-earned victory over Aaron Kline in the Junior division finals. Tatomer, who hails from Santa Barbara, CA, flew across the United States to compete in this tournament, utilizing his four-day stop in the Big Apple to the fullest. And while many have tried to uncover the originator of the "Necrodeck," we believe it is hard to dispute that it was Tatomer's success in New York that led to the popularity of this deck type.

Many major and local tournaments have taken place since February's first Pro Tour event, most of which have been affected by the premiere tournament. With the level of competitive play rising thanks to the elevated stature of these professional tournaments, many players have emerged as stars, standing out as *the* players to beat in future events. Many players considered "Juniors" have been overlooked in this category, simply because of their age. The top Junior competitors in the world go well beyond Tatomer, as recent major tournaments have proven.

The list of young players who have made notable contributions among their friends, as well as the greater game community at large, is endless. Every day there's another young player learning **Magic**, who quickly picks up on the rules, soon wanting to master the complexities and subtleties that lie underneath the surface. Quite a few particular young players, though, who have recently stood out in the eyes of those who play **Magic** at the tournament level, certainly deserve mention. Here they are, in alphabetical order:

David Bachmann (Linden, NJ): David won the Northeast Regionals, a great accomplishment considering the fact that many of the best players from outside the region had to compete in this tournament because they missed their respective regional competition while attending the Pro Tour–Long Beach.

Terry Borer (North York, Canada): Terry is the current Junior champion, having won the *Ice Age/Alliances* constructed-deck tournament format used at the Pro Tour–Columbus. *(Results from Pro Tour–Atlanta were not available at press time.)*

▼ California's Graham Tatomer hopes to regain his form from *Pro Tour – New York*

Chris Cade (San Jose, CA): Chris has recently ranked in the Top 20 of the DCI's Standard (Type II) rankings, but is certainly best known for his many strategy articles posted on the Internet.

Jon Finkel (Fanwood, NJ): Jon was runner-up to David Bachman in the Northeast Regionals. He's currently ranked in the Top 20 in the DCI's Standard (Type II) rankings and finished in ninth place at this years World Championships.

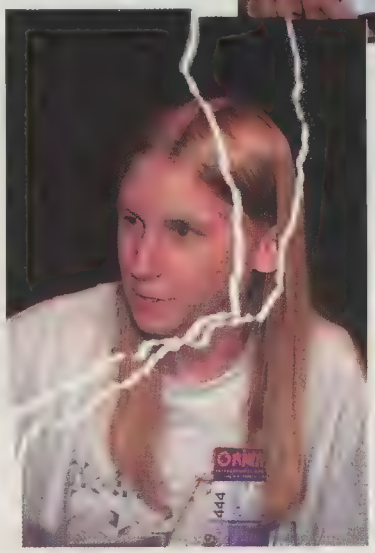
Up-and-comer: New Jersey's Jon Finkel. ▼

Brendon Herzog (Portland, OR): Brendon has consistently placed as a top Junior-division player at each of the first three Pro Tour events. He was also the champion of the Northwest Regionals, and made it to the Top 16 at the U.S. Nationals.

Paul McCabe (Toronto, Canada): McCabe has finished as Junior finalist in the last two Pro Tour events (Long Beach and Columbus). His performances have garnered him a Top 20 Standard (Type II) DCI ranking.

Olle Råde (Göteborg, Sweden): At just 17, Olle is the first teenager to ever win a Pro Tour Master division title. He posted a decisive 3–1 victory over 26-year-old Sean Fleischman of New York in the finals at Pro Tour–Columbus. Råde also was a semi-finalist at Worlds.

Justin Schneider (Lutherville, MD): Justin has become one of the most popular competitors on the East Coast. He convinced Master division competitor Sean Fleischman to use a deck for the Pro Tour–Columbus that Justin developed. Sean made it to the finals with that deck.



▲ Olle Rade was the first teenager to win a major Pro Tour event.

Brad Swan (Landenberg, PA): Brad has been a top Junior competitor from the start, and now stands near the top of the DCI's Limited (Sealed Deck) rankings.

Max Szlagor (Schaumburg, IL): Max emerged victorious in the Junior Booster Draft at the Pro Tour–Long Beach. He is a quality player who knows how to construct a powerful deck.

Jason Zila (Huntington Beach, CA): Jason accomplished one of the most difficult feats in **Magic:** going undefeated in the Swiss-style rounds of the U.S. Nationals (he eventually lost in the single-elimination rounds).

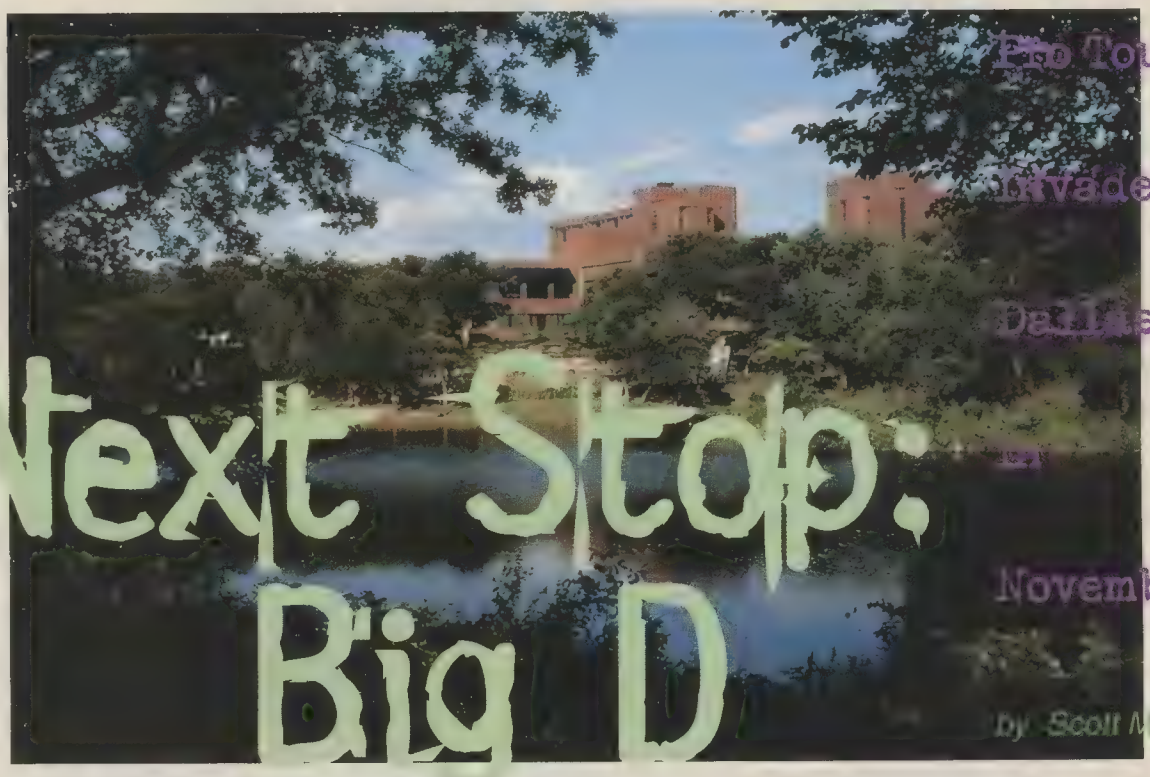
Some of the Junior players listed above have already played in the Master division at some Pro Tour events. The number of players under age eighteen playing in the Master division of the various professional tournaments has increased since the inaugural Pro Tour event. This trend is due in part to the increased money purses for the Master division, but also because some Juniors deserve to be recognized for their true talents. They truly are some of the best **Magic** players in the world.

Texas has long been renown for its sheer size and scope; this year, on November 22–24, the Dallas-Fort Worth metro area continues that tradition by hosting the second stop on Wizards of the Coast's 1996-97 Pro Tour season. Pro Tour–Dallas actually takes place just outside the capital city at the Dallas-Fort Worth Lakes Hilton in Grapevine. Featuring the largest combined payout to date ($250,000), as well as the Junior division World Championships, Pro Tour–Dallas promises to attract some of the best **Magic** players and some of the toughest competition of the Pro Tour's sophomore season.

The Master division will hit the tables in Dallas to compete in a Standard (Type II) environment with a combined purse of $150,000. The champion will take home $26,000, with $16,000 going to the finalist. Semifinalists and quarterfinalists will receive $9,000 and $5,500 apiece, respectively. In addition to the prize money, players can look forward to taking the measure of 1996 World Championship finalist (Master division) Mark Justice, Pro Tour mainstay Matthew Place, and DCI top-ranked player Scott Johns. At press time, these three imposing figures were already making their plans to visit "Big D" and stake their claims; the Top 16 finishers from the 1996 World Championships and Top 4 finishers from all of the 1995-96 Pro Tour events have also been invited.

Also at Pro Tour–Dallas will be a $40,000 Classic (Type I) event; the DCI will invite the Top 128 Classic players based solely on current DCI Classic rankings. The Classic tournament winner will pocket $11,200, the finalist earns $6,900, and semifinalists and quarterfinalists each receive $2,450 and $650, respectively.

The Pro Tour's Junior division (18 and younger) claims equal footing with the Masters this time, with their own World Championship event. Both the Junior World title and $60,000 in scholarship prize money ($16,000 to the winner, $10,000 to the finalist, $9,000 to semifinalists, and $5,500 to quarterfinalists) are up for grabs among some of the sharpest **Magic** players in the world in any age group. With 17-year old Olle Råde's recent success as Pro Tour–Columbus Champion and 1995-96 Pro Tour Player of the Year, the woefully underappreciated Juniors are actually getting some of the respect they deserve *(see article on page 46)*. The Junior World Champion and other finalists will not only have their glory and pricey scholarships, but will also have the attention of the rest of the **Magic** community.



Next Stop: Big D

Pro Tour Invades Dallas in November

by Scott McGough

The Hilton has recently completed the first phase in a major renovation, and makes no apologies for trying to spoil its convention visitors with twenty-six wooded acres and views of Lake Grapevine. Pro Tour–Dallas competitors will be surrounded by both the rugged beauty of the Lone Star State and its legendary hospitality before, during, and after their matches.

The remainder of the 1996-97 Pro Tour season includes Long Beach, California in February; Paris, France in April; and New York City in June. The 1997 **Magic** World Championships will once again be held in the Emerald City (Seattle) next August.

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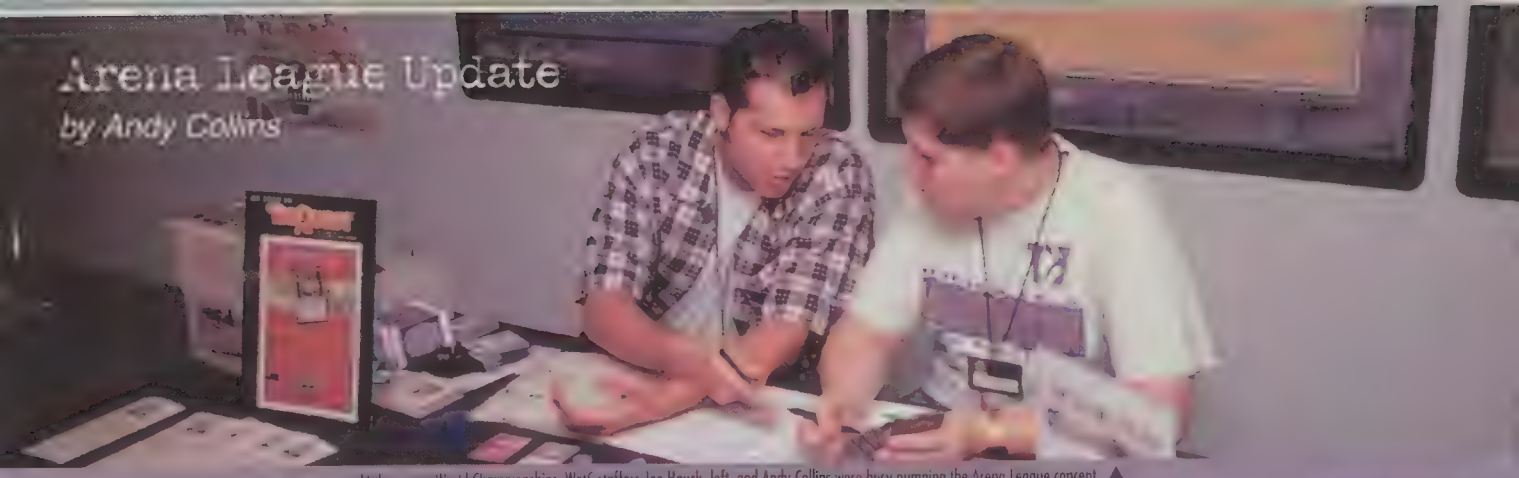
Arena League Update

by Andy Collins



At this year's World Championships, WotC staffers Joe Hauck, left, and Andy Collins were busy pumping the Arena League concept. ▲

Summer's Over, but the Harvest is Just Beginning

By the time you read this article, the Summer Season of Arena—the League for **Magic: The Gathering**—will have finished. More than 200 stores and over 4,000 players from San Francisco to Boston to Atlanta to Seattle participated in this unprecedented, 38-day "event." While final results for Arena's inaugural season were not yet available at press time, the competition was strong for the top spots at each store.

Arena's arrival in stores was anxiously awaited by both retailers and players, even though many weren't sure exactly what to expect. If anything, Arena has exceeded the expectations of many participants. Al Villa at Comic Vendor in Torrance, CA, said Arena play has been "bigger and better than we could have imagined."

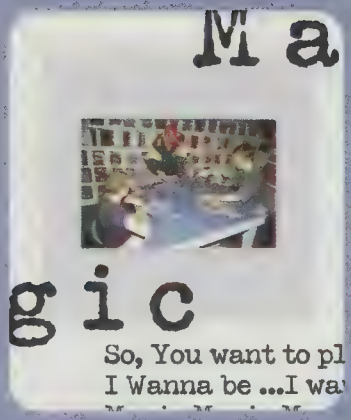
Many participants appreciate Arena's casual atmosphere, contrasting it with the more stressful nature of tournament play. Dan Ostler, from A Place to Play in San Jose, CA, believes that Arena appeals to players because it "allows them to compete and get recognition without playing in long tournaments." Also, since Arena's website, located at <www.wizards.com/Arena> allows players to find official league sites and check their ratings whenever they want, players feel Arena is "more accessible" than tournaments. Jean Chadwick, one of the owners of Chadwicks Games in Kenosha, WI, comments that her players like Arena because they can get ratings quickly, playing as little as a single match.

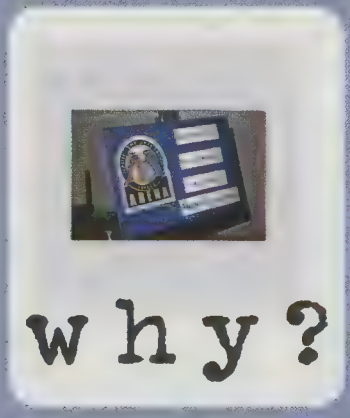
Arena's first season also provided the opportunity for some top league participants to qualify for the **Magic** Pro Tour. End-of-season tournaments in New York, Los Angeles, and Boston allowed Arena players to compete against one another for slots in the Pro Tour—Dallas event, scheduled for November 22–24, 1996. *(Please see Dallas Preview Article on page 48.)* Wizards of the Coast hopes to eventually offer these "Arena-only" Pro Tour Qualifiers to more areas, though this feature may not be available before 1997.

Despite the many components offered by Arena, most players simpy enjoy the opportunity to play **Magic** against a variety of opponents. Noah Grand, who plays at Classic Comics and Cards in Roseville, CA, thinks Arena is a great idea. "It's helped me find more people to play against," he says.

But Arena isn't over yet; not by a long shot. On September 20, the Harvest Season of Arena began in twenty-two metropolitan areas. In addition to the areas already included in Arena's inaugural season, the league now encompasses the following cities (and outlying areas): Cleveland/Akron, OH; Columbus, OH; Denver/Boulder, CO; Detroit/Ann Arbor/Flint, MI; Houston/Galveston, TX; Miami/Fort Lauderdale, FL; Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN; Phoenix/Mesa, AZ; Sacramento, CA; San Diego, CA; and Washington, D.C./Baltimore, MD. Joseph Hauck, business analyst for Arena, projects Harvest Season participation numbers at 450 stores and more than 10,000 players!

But that's not all! On November 8, the Autumn Season begins, with even more metropolitan areas added to the mix: Cincinnati, OH; Kansas City, MO; Milwaukee-Racine, WI; Norfolk/Virginia Beach/Newport News, VA; Pittsburgh, PA; Portland/Salem, OR; St. Louis, MO; San Antonio, TX; and Tampa/St. Petersburg, FL. In addition, Wizards of the Coast hopes to be able to offer Arena to limited areas in Canada beginning in the Autumn Season. Interested retailers should contact Wizards of the Coast Merchant Relations at (800) 821-8028, or send email to <mr@wizards.com>. The Autumn Season will also feature Continuous Draft, a limited-environment format explained more fully in the October 1996 issue of *The Duelist*.





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Participating Stores in First Season (Aug. 2-Sept. 8, 1996)

Comic Rage
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(818) 284-3779, Jon Elrod

The Gathering
2 Nutcracker Ln., Aliso Viejo, CA
(714) 770-2156, Roger Kotow

Darkside Comics
4800 White Ln., Ste. G, Bakersfield, CA
(805) 833-2773, Charles Kim

Inner Sanctum Comics
3508 Ming Ave., Bakersfield, CA
(805) 834-2669, Dennis Hamilton

Dave's Sportscards and Comics
406 1/2 E. Main, Barstow, CA
(619) 255-4741, Dave Hart

Comics and Comix
2502 Telegraph, Berkeley, CA
(510) 845-4091, Ryan Rateaver

Games of Berkeley
2010 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, CA
(415) 927-0460, Pablo Gonzalez

The Last Grenadier
335 San Fernando Blvd., Burbank, CA
(818) 848-9144, Clyde Brien

The Game Zone
21032 Devonshire St., #110,
Chatsworth, CA
(818) 709-4263

Bat Comics
132 Broadway, Chico, CA
(916) 898-0550, Trent Walsh

PJ Cards and Comics
2018 Salvio St., Concord, CA
(510) 687-1924, PJ or Sean

SCGA/Coastal Hobbies
1525 Mesa Verde East, Ste. 215,
Costa Mesa, CA
(714) 444-4566, Brian & Scott Larabee

Superstars
19700 Stevens Creek Blvd., Cupertino, CA
(408) 777-8277, Jon Saso

Big League Collectibles and Games
210 E St., Davis, CA
(916) 753-9655, Ian Welter

All Star Games
2773 S. Diamond Bar Blvd.,
Diamond Bar, CA
(909) 598-4700, Shayne Curtis

Dungeon Games
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(310) 606-0041, Chuck Mann

Anthony's Comics and Games
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(707) 437-0634, Mike Fejarang

The Game Castle
2514 E. Chapman Ave., Fullerton, CA
(714) 871-5800, Ricardo or Tuan

Brookhurst Hobbies
12188 Brookhurst St., Garden Grove, CA
(714) 636-3585, Eric Solie

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(510) 733-9633, Joel Maurer

Who's on First Comics and Cards
29576 Mission Blvd., Hayward, CA
(510) 582-1893, Jeff Ferreira

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10045 Adams Ave., Huntington Beach, CA
(714) 965-1751, Bill Stillwell

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(704) 854-6115, Tong Park

Triple Play Sports Cards
31895 Mission Trail Rd., Lake Elsinore, CA
(909) 674-3487, Tony Sage

The War House
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(310) 424-3180, Steven Lucky

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(805) 523-3343

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616 Tennant Station, Morgan Hill, CA
(408) 776-0725

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North Hollywood, CA
(818) 763-4748, Sharon Feldstein

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(415) 355-8615, Andrew Fong

Paper Heroes
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(805) 273-0185, James Higa

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(415) 328-8100, Dan Kwang

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Pleasanton , CA
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(707) 585-8609, Chad Jensen

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(714) 492-6642, Kirk Smith

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(415) 759-5363, Renee Towan

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(408) 267-6227, Dan

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2980 Union Ave., San Jose, CA
(408) 559-1419, Paul Knaack

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835 Front St., Santa Cruz, CA
(408) 429-9095, Jennifer Willow

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(707) 575-5797, Andrew Cosman

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(408) 438-2032, Joel Grubby

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(818) 386-0855, Dan Pirain

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(818) 451-9924, Frank Burr

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(310) 328-5830, Pat Alrid

Comic Cult 2
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(310) 328-5830, Pat Alrid

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(818) 888-7866, Dustin Lord

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Westlake Village, CA
(818) 865-0324, Caleb

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(203) 372-1985, Stewart Gordon

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(203) 750-0505, Steven Bryant

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(203) 846-5991, Sally Fliess

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(203) 845-8953, Ken Sanaster

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(860) 628-5172, Kevin Brunetto

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(203) 322-0230, David Cunningham

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Alpharetta, GA
(770) 569-2083, Jim Kapper

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(404) 255-5170, Sean/Sunny

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(770) 996-9129, Chuck Sheffey

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(770) 729-9588, Anthony Edwards

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(706) 235-4561, Danny Rampley

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(708) 485-4723, Charlotte Field

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(847) 516-0411, Tom Hirsch

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(312) 871-6816

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1952 W. North Ave., Chicago, IL
(312) 342-2957, Eric

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(312) 935-3244

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(815) 758-7537, Scott Lohr

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(815) 469-5092, Lori Gentile

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(815) 729-1332, Chris

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(815) 933-9484, Edward Klutcharch

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13303 W. 143rd St., Lockport, IL
(708) 301-7748, Ron Krasneck

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(708) 778-0870, Hans Ashman

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(708) 778-0870,

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101 S. Oak Park Ave., Oak Park, IL
(708) 445-0030, Terry Doner

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(630) 980-1080, Tom Klein

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1738 Wise Rd., Schaumburg, IL
(847) 534-8908, Jo Maietta

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(847) 674-4140, Keith Kole

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(505) 983-6037, John Curtis

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(718) 461-4675, Steve Fritz

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547 S. Broadway, Hicksville, NY
(516) 937-1168, Hank Eill

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(215) 752-4500, Warren Wolk

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Cosmic Comic
1320 Commercial, Bellingham, WA
(360) 734-8058, TJ Tipton

Discordia Games
705 Pacific Ave., Bremerton, WA
(360) 415-9419, Stan Wankowski

washington

Docking Bay 93
770 S. Burlington Blvd., Burlington, WA
(360) 757-3531

Games and Gizmos 4
2012 S. 320th, #A, Federal Way, WA
(206) 946-2553, Shawn Erickson

Book World
23406 Pacific Hwy. S., Kent, WA
(206) 824-9422, Gary or Dean

Fantasy Realm
18737 State Hwy. 305 N.E., Poulsbo, WA
(360) 697-6100, Lee Gunby

Frees Comics and Cards
916 S. Third St., Renton, WA
(206) 227-7771, Steve Frees

Reid Comics
17709 108th Ave. S.E., Renton, WA
(206) 271-7376, Brad Reid

Wizards of the Coast Tournament Center
1801 Lind Ave. S.W., Renton, WA
(206) 204-7636, Joe Wedel

Andy's Sports Cards
303 State St., Sedro Wooley, WA
(360) 855-0961, Ray Lokkebo

Allegiance Games
1024 First St., #2, Snohomish, WA
(360) 568-1785, Dave Gerard

Northwest Sportscards
2602 Bridgeport Way W., Tacoma, WA
(206) 564-5139, Sonny Biddix

Proctor's Sports Cards
2703 N. Proctor, Tacoma, WA
(206) 759-2091, Scott Lonheim

Games Plus
17612 140th Ave. N.E., Woodinville, WA
(206) 485-7295, Holly & Don Forbis

wisconsin

Chadwick's Games
2117 52nd St., Kenosha, WI
(414) 658-4263, Jean Chadwick

The Game Guild
752 W. Main St., Lake Geneva, WI
(414) 249-0779, Burl Zorn

Here's How to Become a Certified Magic: The Gathering Judge

Magic Judge Paul Girardi, right, of NYC, paid close attention to moves made by Darwin Mess during PTAT.

Wizards of the Coast, Inc. (WotC) is pleased to announce a new program that will assist our talented tournament players in becoming Magic judges.

First of all, the program involves the creation of our Judges' Certification and Education Program. With this program, WotC is working toward creating a basic standard for all referees and judges of **Magic: The Gathering** tournaments and leagues, and then developing this standard into a three-tiered network. The first tier, known as the Arena Judge level, directs candidates to take a self-administered exam which covers the necessary areas of knowledge required to fulfill the job. An Arena Judge ranking allows him or her to oversee and administer a Retail League as a judge, or assist as an administrator at a standard DCI-sanctioned tournament. The ranking is good for one full year, after which time the judge needs to take an update exam. WotC plans to make a version of the exam available on its website (http://www.wizards.com) in the very near future.

The second tier in WotC's new program is known as the DCI Judge level. At this stage of certification, a judge needs to have completed and passed the Arena Judge level exam, after which time the applicant needs to assist in the preparation and execution of two DCI-sanctioned tournaments, then apply for and pass the DCI Judge's exam. This latter exam is very extensive and covers all aspects of **Magic: The Gathering** information needed to plan and execute tournaments. The holder of a DCI Judge rank also must be a Legend level member of the Duelists' Convocation International.

The third and final tier is the Head Judge level. Knowledgeable candidates who qualify will have met all the criteria listed earlier and/or proven their superior abilities in the tournament field by working in close cooperation with WotC's professional tournament staff. These top-rated individuals go through an extensive interview process with designated members of WotC's staff and, if all goes well, become one of the premier judges for **Magic: The Gathering**. Stepping stones toward this goal may include working with WotC staff at one of the

premier-level tournaments, such as a Pro Tour competition, a product-release tournament, or a specialty tournament (such as a major corporate challenge, a National Championship, or possibly the World Championships). Certified individuals automatically qualify for an attractive incentive program provided by Wizards of the Coast, which is based on the judge's level of service. Incentives consist of WotC products. As an added benefit for holding the rank of Head Judge, WotC will award a complimentary Legend level membership in the DCI.

Each individual who qualifies for one of the three levels of judging needs to provide current phone numbers, addresses, and email addresses (if appropriate) as a resource for event planners, convention organizers, retailers, and others who desire to sponsor tournaments and need qualified tournament staff to help carry out their plans.

Better yet, there are bonuses for qualifying as a tournament judge. For instance, each person receives a special certificate that authenticates his or her certified rank; an ID card (Head Judges receive photo IDs); and access to "Judge-L" on the Internet, as well as to the Judges' WWW page. Selected judges will have a regular column running in *The Companion*, which covers all up-to-date rules, information, and modifications.

If interested, send a letter to Wizards of the Coast, Inc., P.O. Box 707, Renton, WA 98057-0707, attn: Andrew J. Finch; or, if you have access to the Internet, send a post to minotaur@wizards.com. Sign up now. We could use some solid judges who really know their stuff.

Beginning with the 1997-1998 tournament season (August 1997), all sanctioned tournaments will require a certified judging staff. Since this means that many new judges will need to be trained, the Duelists' Convocation International has created the Judge Certification Program.

The program is designed to ensure consistency in all rulings and penalties at DCI-sanctioned tournaments, and to identify and recognize experienced, knowledgeable judges. Structured like an apprenticeship program, judges are certified based on a combination of their practical experience running sanctioned **Magic: The Gathering** tournaments and their demonstrated knowledge of the **Magic** rules. Qualification is determined by a candidate's performance during DCI-sanctioned tournaments and successful completion of a written exam.

The program debuted at the 1996 **Magic: The Gathering** World Championships in Seattle, August 15-18, and will be instituted throughout North America during the following six months. Worldwide certification will follow.

You can begin the application process by expressing your interest to a Level III judge or higher in your area. Then, volunteer to assist the judge with running local DCI-sanctioned tournaments and learn the skills necessary for successful organization of these events. This volunteer period will also provide you with the required experience needed for the practical portion of the certification process. There are five levels of certification (I-V) and four event classes (A-D). Certain events will require the presence of a judge of the appropriate level.

Wizards of the Coast will give benefits to certified judges based on their level of certification. Each judge will receive a copy of *The Oracle*, which contains a complete list of cards, including the casting cost, card type, and text, as well as the most current rulings, errata, and all functional changes. Certified judges will also receive a card identifying their certification level and a letter of certification from Wizards of the Coast. There is a fee for each certification level that covers the cost of judge materials, and you must renew your certification annually.

DCI Update

Official Changes to the Banned & Restricted Lists

Compiled by Jason Carl

The Duelists' Convocation International notifies its members of changes in the Classic (Type I) and Standard (Type II) Banned and Restricted Lists on specific dates each calendar year: Classic (March 1 and September 1), and Standard (March 1, June 1, September 1, and December 1).

Updated Sept. 1, 1996; effective Oct. 1, 1996

STANDARD (TYPE II) RESTRICTED LIST: Both Hymn to Tourach and Strip Mine have been added to the Restricted List.

Hymn to Tourach (Fallen Empires): Hymn to Tourach has been the center of more controversy than any other single card throughout the latter half of the 1995-96 tournament season. Competitors began to suggest its restriction shortly after the first Pro Tour event in New York, primarily because the card was seen by many as the cornerstone of the powerful and successful "Necrodeck." Many DCI members expected its restriction on June 1 but were surprised when the DCI decided to restrict Land Tax but not Hymn to Tourach.

The DCI explained that, at that time, it lacked sufficient data on Hymn's true influence in the Standard (Type II) tournament environment. Necrodecks had barely started to dominate tournaments, and Alliances had not yet been released, giving rise to the possibility that new card combinations and deck designs would emerge to challenge Necrodecks. Moreover, the actual cause of Necro's success was still open to speculation. Some competitors claimed it was the result of several other cards, while others theorized that it was due to the sheer number of competitors (particularly top-ranked players) who used the deck.

The conclusion of the 1995-96 tournament season and the release of Alliances gave the DCI more information on which to base a decision. Hymn to Tourach's impact is more readily visible. One need only recall the semifinal match at the 1996 U.S. Nationals between Dennis Bentley and Matthew Place to witness the Hymn's early game-swing advantage as well as its strong ability to stifle new deck construction ideas.

Strip Mine (Fourth Edition): Restricting Strip Mine echoes the DCI's Black Vise decision earlier this year. This card is so generally effective that an overwhelming majority of tournament players decided to include it in their decks, regardless of the deck's theme or purpose. Its tremendous ability to provide an early game swing, not to mention the fact that it cannot be countered, makes the card too attractive to ignore.

STANDARD (TYPE II) BANNED LIST: No changes.

CLASSIC (TYPE I) RESTRICTED LIST: Fastbond has been added.

Fastbond (*Revised*): This card has occupied a spot on the DCI's "most-watched" list for some time. Fastbond is similar to Channel in its ability to create grossly overpowered, game-winning combinations. Its characteristic is most obvious when Fastbond is used in conjunction with Storm Cauldron, effectively creating a Channel for colored mana, with preventable damage.

CLASSIC (TYPE I) BANNED LIST: No changes.

DCI Sanctioned Events List

type II

TYPE II AND SEALED DECK TOURNAMENTS
(OCTOBER 1-OCTOBER 31, 1996)

Tourney	Location	Date	Coord'r	Phone
The Sentry Box Tournaments	10th Ave SW Calgary, AB	10/1/96	Greg Latour	(403) 245-2121
Tuesday Night Tournament	of Rome Rome, GA	10/1/96	Thomas Cawthon	(706) 235-4561
Type II Tournament	Brook Park Rd Ext N Olmsted, OH	10/1/96	Thomas King	(216) 282-7850
The Mausoleum Weekly	Cumberland Ave Louisville , TN	10/2/96	David Adkins	(423) 977-9153
Weekly Tournaments	70 East Drexel, NC	10/3/96	Joe Williams	(704) 433-7521
Daddy Jim's Weekly Tournament	Westchester Dr. High Point, NC	10/4/96	Mike Krzywicki	(910) 889-9900
MagiCon	S. Natches Ct. 7G Englewood, CO	10/4/96	Eric Smith	(303) 781-3895
Multiverse Tournament-Type II	Montauk Highway Mastic, NY	10/4/96	Keith Myers	(516) 281-7420
	Hotel Denver, CO	10/4/96	Eric Smith	(303) 366-3977
The Gaming Realm	Frederick, MD	10/4/96	Tony Ordowa	(301) 662-4263
Armageddon	Troy-Schenectady Rd (Rt 2) ,	10/5/96	Wesley Williams	(518) 371-2952
Gray Matter-Wash DC	Gray Matter-Wash DC , DC	10/5/96	Glen Scott Friedman	(212) 633-1288
MagiCon	S. Natches Ct. 7G Englewood, CO	10/5/96	Eric Smith	(303) 781-3895
Pendragon Weekly - Type II	N Main St Barre, VT	10/5/96	Charles Arnold	(802) 476-7064
Philly's Back To School	Philadelphia, PA	10/5/96	Michael Gilchrist	(215) 571-4619
The Arena Tournaments	E Commercial Springfield, MO	10/5/96	Mike McKee	(417) 865-4752
Type II Tournament	9th Street N St Petersburg, FL	10/5/96	Susan Correa	(813) 526-7494
Type II Tournament	S Potomac St Hagerstown, MD	10/5/96	Tony Ordona	(301) 745-5973
	Gateway Blvd Springfield, OR	10/5/96	Albert Amato	(541) 689-4179
	E Market St Kingsport, TN	10/5/96	Dewayne Chase	(423) 247-8997
Superhero City	Sicklerville, NJ	10/5/96	Frank Cataldi	(609) 629-0722
Collector's Dream	Acdharetta, PA	10/5/96	Jim Kapper	(770) 569-2083
Hobby Shop	Fond du Lac, WI	10/5/96	Robert Moses	(414) 922-8338
All Fun & Games	Magnolia Ave. Riverside, CA	10/6/96	Eric Phillips	(909) 781-2772
Artifex Weekly Tourney-Type II	Carmel Mtn Rd San Diego, CA	10/6/96	James Parenti	(619) 487-0589
Campus Collectibles	Ann Arbor, MI	10/6/96	Jim Hwang	(313) 663-6646
Comic Warehouse-Naples Tourn	Airport Road North Naples, FL	10/6/96	Bob Kobzina	(941) 643-1020
MagiCon	S. Natches Ct. 7G Englewood, CO	10/6/96	Eric Smith	(303) 781-3895
Rockin' Dominia	Thompson Stu. Cntr. Foxtrap, NF	10/6/96	Jason Strong	(709) 834-4964
Slam Fest	No. Hollywood , CA	10/6/96	Eric Severson	(818) 763-4748
The Arena Tournaments	E Commercial Springfield, MO	10/6/96	Mike McKee	(417) 865-4752
Tournaments Of Champions	Albequerque Convention Center Albequerque, NM	10/6/96	Stan Tansan	(505) 858-0212
	Fairplay Street Aurora, Co	10/6/96	Eric Smith	(303) 366-3977
DCI Sanctioned Tourney @ Tom's	Bossier Crossroads Bossier City, LA	10/8/96	Michael Champion	(318) 747-6153
MagiCon	S. Natches Ct. 7G Englewood, CO	10/8/96	Eric Smith	(303) 781-3895
Masoleum Weekly	W Cumberland Ave Knowville, TN	10/8/96	David Adkins	(423) 977-9153
The Sentry Box Tournaments	10th Ave SW Calgary, AB	10/8/96	Greg Latour	(403) 245-2121
Type II Tournament	Brook Park Rd Ext N Olmsted, OH	10/8/96	Thomas King	(216) 282-7850
MagiCon	S. Natches Ct. 7G Englewood, CO	10/9/96	Eric Smith	(303) 781-3895
Angie's Thursday Weekly	Sutherland Ave Knoxville, TN	10/10/96	Angela Hitson	(423) 977-9153
Weekly Tournaments	70 East Drexel, NC	10/10/96	Joe Williams	(704) 433-7521
Daddy Jim's Weekly Tournament	Westchester Dr High Point, NC	10/11/96	Robert Hall	(910) 889-9900
MagiCon	S. Natches Ct. 7G Englewood, CO	10/11/96	Eric Smith	(303) 781-3895
Multiverse Tournament-Type II	Montauk Highway Mastic, NY	10/11/96	Keith Myers	(516) 281-7420
	The Gaming Realm Frederick, MD	10/11/96	Tony Ordowa	(301) 662-4263
Comix Plus - Type II	North "H" St Lompoc, CA	10/12/96	George Laufer	(805) 736-0050
Deck Master	The Hidden Guild Lake Worth, FL	10/12/96	Roger Hart	(407) 965-6692
Dreamers Friday Nights	St. Louis Park, MN	10/12/96	Nicholas Csercse	(612) 938-8163
Gray Matter-NYC	Gray Matter-NYC New Your City, NY	10/12/96	Glen Scott Friedman	(212) 633-1288
Gray Matter-Philadelphia	Gray Matter-Philadelphia Philadelphia, PA	10/12/96	Glen Scott Friedman	(212) 633-1288
MagiCon	S. Natches Ct. 7G Englewood, CO	10/12/96	Eric Smith	(303) 781-3895
MJM-Type II	S Georgia Amarillo, TX	10/12/96	Gary Hutson	(806) 358-4515
Pendragon Weekly - Type II	N Main St Barre, VT	10/12/96	Charles Arnold	(802) 476-7064
Pensacon	E Gregory St Pensacola, FL	10/12/96	Daniel Churukian	(904) 438-7742
The Arena Tournaments	E Commercial Springfield, MO	10/12/96	Mike McKee	(417) 865-4752
The Pack Shack	Eureka - Southgate, MI	10/12/96	Jeneen	(313) 284-0550
Type II Tournament	S Potomac St Hagerstown, MD	10/12/96	Tony Ordona	(301) 745-5973
You Con 13	Cochran Simi Valley, CA	10/12/96	Jamey S Parker	(805) 579-0313
	& Exit 6 Chester, PA	10/12/96	David Schenkel	(610) 853-9788
	E Market St Kingsport, TN	10/12/96	Dewayne Chase	(423) 239-7256
	Lake Country ComicsOconomowoc, WI	10/12/96	Joe Heinecke	(414) 569-8727
	New Science Bld Beecher St Bloomington, IL	10/12/96	Larry Walker	(309) 454-6602
All Fun & Games	Magnolia Ave. Riverside, CA	10/13/96	Eric Phillips	(909) 781-2772
Artifex Weekly Tourney-Type II	Carmel Mtn Rd San Diego, CA	10/13/96	James Parenti	(619) 487-0589
Autum Legends Type II Tourney	Willow Grove Park Willow Grove, PA	10/13/96	Dorian Anders	(215) 657-6141
Dragon's Dream	w. e. street Belleville, IL	10/13/96	Dale Manning	(706) 234-7159
MagiCon	S. Natches Ct. 7G Englewood, CO	10/13/96	Eric Smith	(303) 781-3895
Slam Fest	No. Hollywood , CA	10/13/96	Eric Severson	(818) 763-4748
The Arena Tournaments	E Commercial Springfield, MO	10/13/96	Mike McKee	(417) 865-4752
The Mausoleum Weekly	Cumberland Ave Louisville , TN	10/13/96	David Adkins	(423) 977-9153
Type II Tournament	N Bridge St Linden, MI	10/13/96	Raymond Carson	(810) 735-6010
Westford Tournament-Type II	Main St Westford, MA	10/13/96	Ken Dunn	(508) 692-5511
	Auburn, ME	10/13/96	Carl Hebert	(207) 777-3144
	Riverdale St W Springfield, MA	10/14/96	Mark Leclere	(413) 731-7237
DCI Sanctioned Tourney @ Tom's	Bossier Crossroads Bossier City, LA	10/15/96	Michael Champion	(318) 747-6153
MagiCon	S. Natches Ct. 7G Englewood, CO	10/15/96	Eric Smith	(303) 781-3895
The Sentry Box Tournaments	10th Ave SW Calgary, AB	10/15/96	Greg Latour	(403) 245-2121
Type II Tournament	Brook Park Rd Ext N Olmsted, OH	10/15/96	Thomas King	(216) 282-7850
The Mausoleum Weekly	Cumberland Ave Louisville , TN	10/16/96	David Adkins	(423) 977-9153
Weekly Tournaments	70 East Drexel, NC	10/17/96	Joe Williams	(704) 433-7521
Daddy Jim's Weekly Tournament	Westchester Dr. High Point, NC	10/18/96	Mike Krzywicki	(910) 889-9900
MagiCon	S. Natches Ct. 7G Englewood, CO	10/18/96	Eric Smith	(303) 781-3895
Multiverse Tournament-Type II	Montauk Highway Mastic, NY	10/18/96	Keith Myers	(516) 281-7420
	The Gaming Realm Frederick, MD	10/18/96	Tony Ordowa	(301) 662-4263
All Hallow's Eve	Lubbock, TX	10/19/96	The Mad Hatter	(806) 763-4054
Another Universe	Universe Washington, DC	10/19/96	Donny Wallace	(202) 333-8651
Game Day II	Bailey's Restaurant Exton, PA	10/19/96	Penni Simoneau	(610) 873-3569
Gray Matter-Connecticut	Gray Matter-Connecticut , CT	10/19/96	Glen Scott Friedman	(212) 633-1288
MagiCon	S. Natches Ct. 7G Englewood, CO	10/19/96	Eric Smith	(303) 781-3895
Pendragon Weekly - Type II	N Main St Barre, VT	10/19/96	Charles Arnold	(802) 476-7064
Shahrazad's Tournament IV	New Circle Rd NE Lexington, KY	10/19/96	Michael Crow	(606) 255-9410
The Arena Tournaments	E Commercial Springfield, MO	10/19/96	Mike McKee	(417) 865-4752
Type II Tournament	Kresge Dr Amherst, OH	10/19/96	Thomas King	(216) 282-7850
Type II Tournament	S Potomac St Hagerstown, MD	10/19/96	Tony Ordona	(301) 745-5973
UMR Moxey Tourney	Farrar Dr Rolla, MO	10/19/96	Tom Bumgardner	(573) 368-4791
	S Eastern Las Vegas, NV	10/19/96	Darryl Wilson	(702) 260-4924
All Fun & Games	Magnolia Ave. Riverside, CA	10/20/96	Eric Phillips	(909) 781-2772
Artifex Weekly Tourney-Type II	Carmel Mtn Rd San Diego, CA	10/20/96	James Parenti	(619) 487-0589
Classic Comics Weekly	Arlington, TX	10/20/96	Brian DePadro	(817) 461-4263
MagiCon	S. Natches Ct. 7G Englewood, CO	10/20/96	Eric Smith	(303) 781-3895
Sanctioned Sunday	Cuyahoga Falls, OH	10/20/96	Nada Troost	(330) 922-4263
Slam Fest	No. Hollywood , CA	10/20/96	Eric Severson	(818) 763-4748
The Arena Tournaments	E Commercial Springfield, MO	10/20/96	Mike McKee	(417) 865-4752
	Comic Town 4 Columbus, OH	10/20/96	Geoffrey Hatten	(614) 262-5006
DCI Sanctioned Tourney @ Tom's	Bossier Crossroads Bossier City, LA	10/22/96	Michael Champion	(318) 747-6153
MagiCon	S. Natches Ct. 7G Englewood, CO	10/22/96	Eric Smith	(303) 781-3895
The Sentry Box Tournaments	10th Ave SW Calgary, AB	10/22/96	Greg Latour	(403) 245-2121
Type II Tournament	Brook Park Rd Ext N Olmsted, OH	10/22/96	Thomas King	(216) 282-7850
Angie's Thursday Weekly	Sutherland Ave Knoxville, TN	10/24/96	Angela Hitson	(423) 977-9153

DCI Sanctioned Events List

sealed deck

TYPE II AND SEALED DECK TOURNAMENTS
(OCTOBER 1-OCTOBER 31, 1996)

Weekly Tournaments	70 East Drexel, NC	10/24/96	Joe Williams	(704) 433-7521
Ice Age Tournament	9th Street N St Petersburg, FL	10/25/96	Susan Correa	(813) 526-7494
Kulcon 5	Wichita, KS	10/25/96	John Whitmer	(316) 686-7131
MagiCon	S. Natches Ct. 7G Englewood, CO	10/25/96	Eric Smith	(303) 781-3895
MileHiCon	Elati St Denver, CO	10/25/96	Eric Smith	(303) 426-0806
Multiverse Tournament-Type II	Montauk Highway Mastic, NY	10/25/96	Keith Myers	(516) 281-7420
	The Gaming Realm Frederick, MD	10/25/96	Tony Ordowa	(301) 662-4263
Comix Plus - Type II	North "H" St Lompoc, CA	10/26/96	George Laufer	(805) 736-0050
Dreamers Sports Cards & More	Highway 7 St. Louis Park, MN	10/26/96	Nick Csercse	(612) 938-8163
Frontier Wars	S Morris St Normal, IL	10/26/96	Larry Walker	(309) 454-6602
Gray Matter-Boston	Gray Matter-Boston Boston, MA	10/26/96	Glen Scott Friedman	(212) 633-1288
Gray Matter-New Jersey	Gray Matter-New Jersey , NJ	10/26/96	Glen Scott Friedman	(212) 633-1288
King Of The Keep II	Fairfield Bowling Lanes Fairfield, OH	10/26/96	Edward Lewis	(800) 591-0210
MagiCon	S. Natches Ct. 7G Englewood, CO	10/26/96	Eric Smith	(303) 781-3895
MileHiCon	Elati St Denver, CO	10/26/96	Eric Smith	(303) 426-0806
Minnesota Challenge II-Type II	Highway 7 St. Louis Park, MN	10/26/96	Nick Csercse	(612) 938-8163
Pendragon Weekly - Type II	N Main St Barre, VT	10/26/96	Charles Arnold	(802) 476-7064
The Arena Tournaments	E Commercial Springfield, MO	10/26/96	Mike McKee	(417) 865-4752
The Pack Shack	Eureka - Southgate, MI	10/26/96	Jeneen	(313) 284-0550
Type II Tournament	Brook Park Rd Ext N Olmsted, OH	10/26/96	Thomas King	(216) 282-7850
Type II Tournament	S Potomac St Hagerstown, MD	10/26/96	Tony Ordona	(301) 745-5973
	Allyn, WA	10/26/96	Rebecca Merrill	(360) 275-4873
	Port Orchard A.C.C. Port Orchard , WA	10/26/96	Rebecca Merrill	(360) 275-4873
All Fun & Games	Magnolia Ave. Riverside, CA	10/27/96	Eric Phillips	(909) 781-2772
Artifex Weekly Tourney-Type II	Carmel Mtn Rd San Diego, CA	10/27/96	James Parenti	(619) 487-0589
Comic Warehouse-Ft Myers Tourn	Pondella Rd N Ft Meyers, FL	10/27/96	Bob Kobzina	(941) 656-0223
Dragon's Dream	w. e. street Belleville, IL	10/27/96	Dale Manning	(706) 234-7159
MagiCon	S. Natches Ct. 7G Englewood, CO	10/27/96	Eric Smith	(303) 781-3895
MileHiCon	Elati St Denver, CO	10/27/96	Eric Smith	(303) 426-0806
Slam Fest	No. Hollywood , CA	10/27/96	Eric Severson	(818) 763-4748
The Arena Tournaments	E Commercial Springfield, MO	10/27/96	Mike McKee	(417) 865-4752
Type II Tournament	Kresge Dr Amherst, OH	10/27/96	Thomas King	(216) 282-7850
	Stony Point Rd Santa Rosa, CA	10/27/96	Andrew Cosman	(707) 575-5797
Adventures In Comics And Games	Carmichael, CA	10/27/96	Avram Oliver	(916) 973-9064
DCI Sanctioned Tourney @ Tom's	Bossier Crossroads Bossier City, LA	10/29/96	Michael Champion	(318) 747-6153
MagiCon	S. Natches Ct. 7G Englewood, CO	10/29/96	Eric Smith	(303) 781-3895
Masoleum Weekly	W Cumberland Ave Knowville, TN	10/29/96	David Adkins	(423) 977-9153
Type II Tournament	Brook Park Rd Ext N Olmsted, OH	10/29/96	Thomas King	(216) 282-7850
The Mausoleum Weekly	Cumberland Ave Louisville , TN	10/30/96	David Adkins	(423) 977-9153
Weekly Tournaments	70 East Drexel, NC	10/31/96	Joe Williams	(704) 433-7521
DCI Sanctioned Tourney @ Tom's	Bossier Crossroads Bossier City, LA	10/1/96	Michael Champion	(318) 747-6153
Masoleum Weekly	W Cumberland Ave Knowville, TN	10/1/96	David Adkins	(423) 977-9153
	Tom's Triple Play Bossier City, LA	10/1/96	Josh Rauschenbach	(318) 747-6153
Deck Master	The Hidden Guild Lake Worth, FL	10/3/96	Roger Hart	(407) 965-6692
MagiCon	S. Natches Ct. 7G Englewood, CO	10/3/96	Eric Smith	(303) 781-3895
Dreamers Sportscards & More	Highway 7 St. Louis Park, MN	10/4/96	Nick Csercse	(612) 938-8163
Comix Plus - IA Sealed	North "H" St Lompoc, CA	10/5/96	George Laufer	(805) 736-0050
MagiCon	S. Natches Ct. 7G Englewood, CO	10/5/96	Eric Smith	(303) 781-3895
Masoleum Weekly	Gunbarrel Rd Chattanooga, TN	10/5/96	David Adkins	(423) 977-9153
One Sanctioned Weekly Tourney	Dragon's Lair East Worcester, MA	10/5/96	Carl LiBassi	(508) 752-6862
Pendragon Weekly - Sealed	N Main St Barre, VT	10/5/96	Charles Arnold	(802) 476-7064
Philly's Back To School	Philadelphia, PA	10/5/96	Michael Gilchrist	(215) 571-4619
Sealed Deck Tournament	Kresge Dr Amherst, OH	10/5/96	Thomas King	(216) 282-7850
	Fairplay Street Aurora, Co	10/5/96	Eric Smith	(303) 366-3977
MagiCon	S. Natches Ct. 7G Englewood, CO	10/6/96	Eric Smith	(303) 781-3895
Sealed Deck Tournament	N Bridge St Linden, MI	10/6/96	Raymond Carson	(810) 735-6010
Slam Fest	Slam Pit North Hollywood, CA	10/6/96	Eric Severson	(818) 763-4748
	Fariplay St. Aurora, Co	10/6/96	Eric Smith	(303) 366-3977
	Comic Town 4 Columbus, OH	10/6/96	Geoffrey Hatten	(614) 262-5006
MagiCon	S. Natches Ct. 7G Englewood, CO	10/7/96	Eric Smith	(303) 781-3895
The Night Tournament	of Rome Rome, GA	10/8/96	Thomas Cawthon	(706) 235-4561
MagiCon	S. Natches Ct. 7G Englewood, CO	10/10/96	Eric Smith	(303) 781-3895
MagiCon	S. Natches Ct. 7G Englewood, CO	10/12/96	Eric Smith	(303) 781-3895
MJM-Sealed Deck	S Georgia Amarillo, TX	10/12/96	Gary Hutson	(806) 358-4515
Ole Sanctioned Weekly Tourney	Dragon's Lair East Worcester, MA	10/12/96	William Bovenzi	(508) 752-6862
Pendragon Weekly - Sealed	N Main St Barre, VT	10/12/96	Charles Arnold	(802) 476-7064
Sealed Deck Tournament	Kresge Dr Amherst, OH	10/12/96	Thomas King	(216) 282-7850
You Con 13	Cochran Simi Valley, CA	10/12/96	Jamey S Parker	(805) 579-0313
	& Exit 6 Chester, PA	10/12/96	David Schenkel	(610) 853-9788
Fall Is Here, Are You?	Greenspray Coffee, Books,& Etc Hobbs, NM	10/13/96	Christian Germany	(505) 392-6515
MagiCon	S. Natches Ct. 7G Englewood, CO	10/13/96	Eric Smith	(303) 781-3895
Slam Fest	Slam Pit North Hollywood, CA	10/13/96	Eric Severson	(818) 763-4748
	Adventures In Comics And Games Carmichael, CA	10/13/96	Avram Oliver	(916) 973-9064
MagiCon	S. Natches Ct. 7G Englewood, CO	10/14/96	Eric Smith	(303) 781-3895
Masoleum Weekly	W Cumberland Ave Knowville, TN	10/15/96	David Adkins	(423) 977-9153
Deck Master	The Hidden Guild Lake Worth, FL	10/17/96	Roger Hart	(407) 965-6692
MagiCon	S. Natches Ct. 7G Englewood, CO	10/17/96	Eric Smith	(303) 781-3895
Dreamers Sports Cards & More	Highway 7 St. Louis Park, MN	10/18/96	Nick Csercse	(612) 938-8163
Sealed Deck Tournament	9th Street N St Petersburg, FL	10/18/96	Susan Correa	(813) 526-7494
All Hallow's Eve	Lubbock, TX	10/19/96	The Mad Hatter	(806) 763-4054
Game Day II	Bailey's Restaurant Exton, PA	10/19/96	Penni Simoneau	(610) 873-3569
Lady Luck	Larkspur Lane Grass Valley, CA	10/19/96	Stuart Smith	(916) 273-1211
MagiCon	S. Natches Ct. 7G Englewood, CO	10/19/96	Eric Smith	(303) 781-3895
Ole Weekly Sanctioned Tourney	Dragon's Lair East Worcester, MA	10/19/96	Charles Schletzbaum	(508) 752-6862
Pendragon Weekly - Sealed	N Main St Barre, VT	10/19/96	Charles Arnold	(802) 476-7064
UMR Moxen Tourney	Farrar Dr Rolla, MO	10/19/96	Tom Bumgardner	(573) 368-4791
	E Market St Kingsport, TN	10/19/96	Dewayne Chase	(423) 247-8997
Superhero City	Sicklerville, NJ	10/19/96	Frank Cataldi	(609) 629-0722
Collector's Dream	Acdharetta, PA	10/19/96	Jim Kapper	(770) 569-2083
Hobby Shop	Fond du Lac, WI	10/19/96	Robert Moses	(414) 922-8338
Campus Collectibles	Ann Arbor, MI	10/20/96	Jim Hwang	(313) 663-6646
MagiCon	S. Natches Ct. 7G Englewood, CO	10/20/96	Eric Smith	(303) 781-3895
Mendota Manna Fest	Lions Inn Mendota, IL	10/20/96	Dan Dunlap	(815) 539-6301
Slam Fest	Slam Pit North Hollywood, CA	10/20/96	Eric Severson	(818) 763-4748
MagiCon	S. Natches Ct. 7G Englewood, CO	10/21/96	Eric Smith	(303) 781-3895
MagiCon	S. Natches Ct. 7G Englewood, CO	10/24/96	Eric Smith	(303) 781-3895
Kulcon 5	Wichita, KS	10/25/96	John Whitmer	(316) 686-7131
Dreamers Sports Cards & More	St. Louis Park, MN	10/26/96	Nick Csercse	(612) 938-8163
MagiCon	S. Natches Ct. 7G Englewood, CO	10/26/96	Eric Smith	(303) 781-3895
Masoleum Weekly	Gunbarrel Rd Chattanooga, TN	10/26/96	David Adkins	(423) 977-9153
MileHiCon	Elati St Denver, CO	10/26/96	Eric Smith	(303) 426-0806
Mirage Sealed Deck Tournament	King Street North Hampton, MA	10/26/96	Chris Aylott	(413) 584-0994
Pendragon Weekly - Sealed	N Main St Barre, VT	10/26/96	Charles Arnold	(802) 476-7064
	Greentree Rd Pittsburgh, PA	10/26/96	Michael Pittek	(412) 488-3779
MagiCon	S. Natches Ct. 7G Englewood, CO	10/27/96	Eric Smith	(303) 781-3895
MileHiCon	Elati St Denver, CO	10/27/96	Eric Smith	(303) 762-1311
Slam Fest	Slam Pit North Hollywood, CA	10/27/96	Eric Severson	(818) 763-4748
	Stony Point Rd Santa Rosa, CA	10/27/96	Andrew Cosman	(707) 575-5797
MagiCon	S. Natches Ct. 7G Englewood, CO	10/28/96	Eric Smith	(303) 781-3895
MagiCon	S. Natches Ct. 7G Englewood, CO	10/31/96	Eric Smith	(303) 781-3895

Reader Survey

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT THE NEW STAND-ALONE *DUELIST SIDEBOARD*!

Please photocopy this page and send us your response to be entered in a drawing to win a free box of Mirage™ booster packs. Fifty remaining randomly drawn survey respondents will each be awarded a free Magic booster pack. Please mail your survey by Nov. 14, 1996 to: *The Duelist Sideboard*, Wizards of the Coast, P.O. Box 707, Renton, WA 98055.

1.) How do you rate *The Duelist Sideboard* overall?

EXCELLENT				TERRIBLE
O	O	O	O	O

2.) At a price of $1.95, how likely would you be to subscribe to *The Duelist Sideboard*?

DEFINITELY WILL SUBSCRIBE	PROBABLY WILL SUBSCRIBE	MIGHT OR MIGHT NOT SUBSCRIBE	PROBABLY NOT SUBSCRIBE	DEFINITELY NOT SUBSCRIBE
O	O	O	O	O

3.) What do you like about *The Duelist Sideboard*?

_____

_____

4.) What improvements do you suggest for *The Duelist Sideboard*?

_____

_____

5.) How do you rate *The Duelist Sideboard* on these features?

	EXCELLENT				TERRIBLE
TOURNAMENT COVERAGE	O	O	O	O	O
QUALITY OF ARTICLES	O	O	O	O	O
CONTENT	O	O	O	O	O
THE "LOOK"	O	O	O	O	O

6.) Would you be interested in tournament coverage of games (e.g. **Overpower**, **Middle Earth**) made by companies other than Wizards of the Coast ?

YES	NO
O	O

7.) Would you like to see coverage of computer gaming (e.g. **Doom, Warhammer**) tournaments?

YES	NO
O	O

8.) What content are you most interested in seeing appear inside future issues?

_____

_____

9.) How many TCG tournaments have you attended in the last year?

0	1-5	6-10	11+
O	O	O	O

10.) Are you a retailer of trading card games?

YES	NO
O	O

11.) Please tell us about yourself:

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

Phone: (_____) _____

Gender:

MALE	FEMALE
O	O

Age: O UNDER 13 O 13-17 O 18-24 O 25-34 O 35-44 O 45-55 O OVER 55

12.) Household Income (if under 18, family's) before taxes:

- O Under $15,000
- O $15,001-$25,000
- O $25,001-$35,000
- O $35,001-$50,000
- O $50,001-$75,000
- O Over $75,000

13.) How long have you played **Magic**? (**Magic** was first sold in August 1993)

- O Less than 3 months
- O 1 - 2 years
- O 2 - 3 years
- O 3 - 6 months
- O 7 months - 1 year
- O More than 3 years

14.) How many **Magic** cards do you own?

- O Less than 250
- O 251 - 1000
- O 1001 - 2000
- O 2001 - 5000
- O 5001 - 10,000
- O More than 10,000

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RoboRally Worlds

Eric Dodds Takes Title; WotC "Dream Team" Wins Celebrity Battle

by Paul Randles

The 1996 **RoboRally** World Championships, held August 16–17 at Wizards of the Coast headquarters in Renton, WA, came to a close with a surprising upset as upstart Eric Dodds of Coast Mesa, CA, upset '96 U.S. National Champion Robert Campbell of Alameda, CA, U.S. Finalist Andy Stalker of Columbus, OH, and two other top-notch competitors—Faustino Cantu of Mexico and Joe Grace of Belluvue, WA. In a grueling two-hour match with two-minute turns, Dodds ran through some subtle yet devastating bottlenecks in this multi-level event by carefully utilizing his option card and moving on to victory.

Campbell and Stalker earned their rankings by finishing in the Top 2 spots at the thirty-five-player Nationals held at the Origins Game Expo & Fair in Columbus, OH, in July. The pair traveled to Seattle to compete in two historic events: the **RoboRally** Worlds, and the new and exciting Wizards of the Coast "Dream Team" Challenge.

Designed as a team event, the Dream Team Challenge pitted Campbell and Stalker against WotC's own **RoboRally** "Dream Team" (WotC game designer Richard Garfield and company president Peter Adkison). Unlike most team games played previously, this event pitted the two-man teams against each other in a relay race requiring the flags to be touched in succession by *either* team member. Other restrictions included communication and programming constraints. Following the disbursement of program cards, the teams were unable to communicate with each other and had just two minutes to program their robots—otherwise the unprogrammed slots would be drawn randomly from their hand.

As the game began, it seemed as though both teams were running neck-and-neck. Neither team was ahead by the time they hit flag 2. Just then the U.S. duo kicked into high gear and hit flags 3 and 4 *one* movement phase apart. Next they hit flags 5 and 6 *one* movement phase apart.

The Dream Team looked befuddled. Adkison couldn't find a second move, and Garfield backed up twice and was sitting on the wrong side of the board, even considering running off the board to come back closer to the flag. It looked to be a runaway win for the National pair as they went up six flags to two in this eight-flag race.

During the "Dream Team" matchup, "Thunder" and "Lightning" were sporting yellow.

However, that's when Peter "Thunder" Adkison kicked into overdrive. He moved over and waited at flag 7. As the national champ rounded the corner, Adkison pulled out and—BOOM—self-destruct, taking out both of them. Then, as Campbell returned, Adkison readied his missile launcher and in one turn, moved the national champ over flag 7, shooting him twice with missiles, blowing him up again. Meanwhile, with some fancy footwork around Stalker, Richard "Lightning" Garfield raced around touching all of the other flags.

WotC's Dream Team never allowed the Nationals team to see flag 7. In an amazing come-from-behind victory, the WotC Dream Team of "Thunder" and "Lightning" won eight flags to six. It was certainly a battle to remember!

Adkison, moments after the victory, screamed: "This was the best game of **RoboRally** I've ever played."

Competitors in the '96 Worlds included, clockwise from far left: Grace, Campbell, Dodds, Cantu, and Stalker.

'96 **RoboRally** WORLDS FINAL RESULTS

1st:	Eric Dodds	(Costa Mesa, CA)
2nd:	Andrew Stalker	(Columbus, OH)
3rd:	Joe Grace	(Belluvue, WA)
4th:	Faustino Cantu	(Monterrey, Mexico)
5th:	Robert Campbell	(Alameda, CA)

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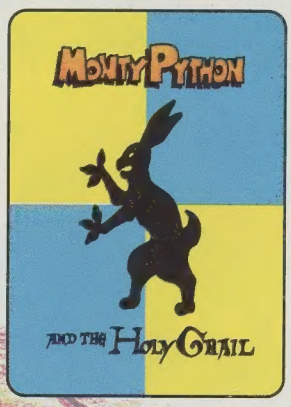

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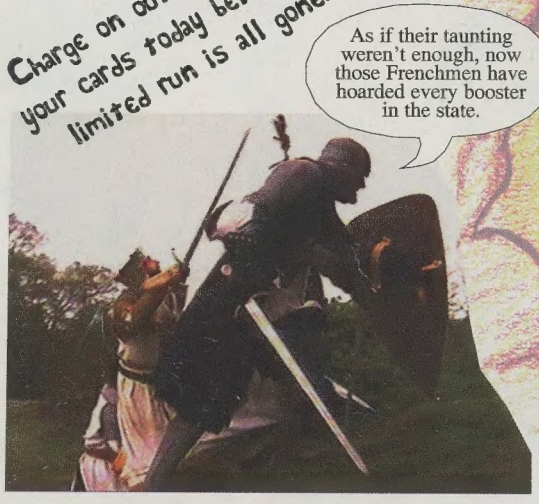

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[Mønti Pythøn Ik den Hølie Gräilen]

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